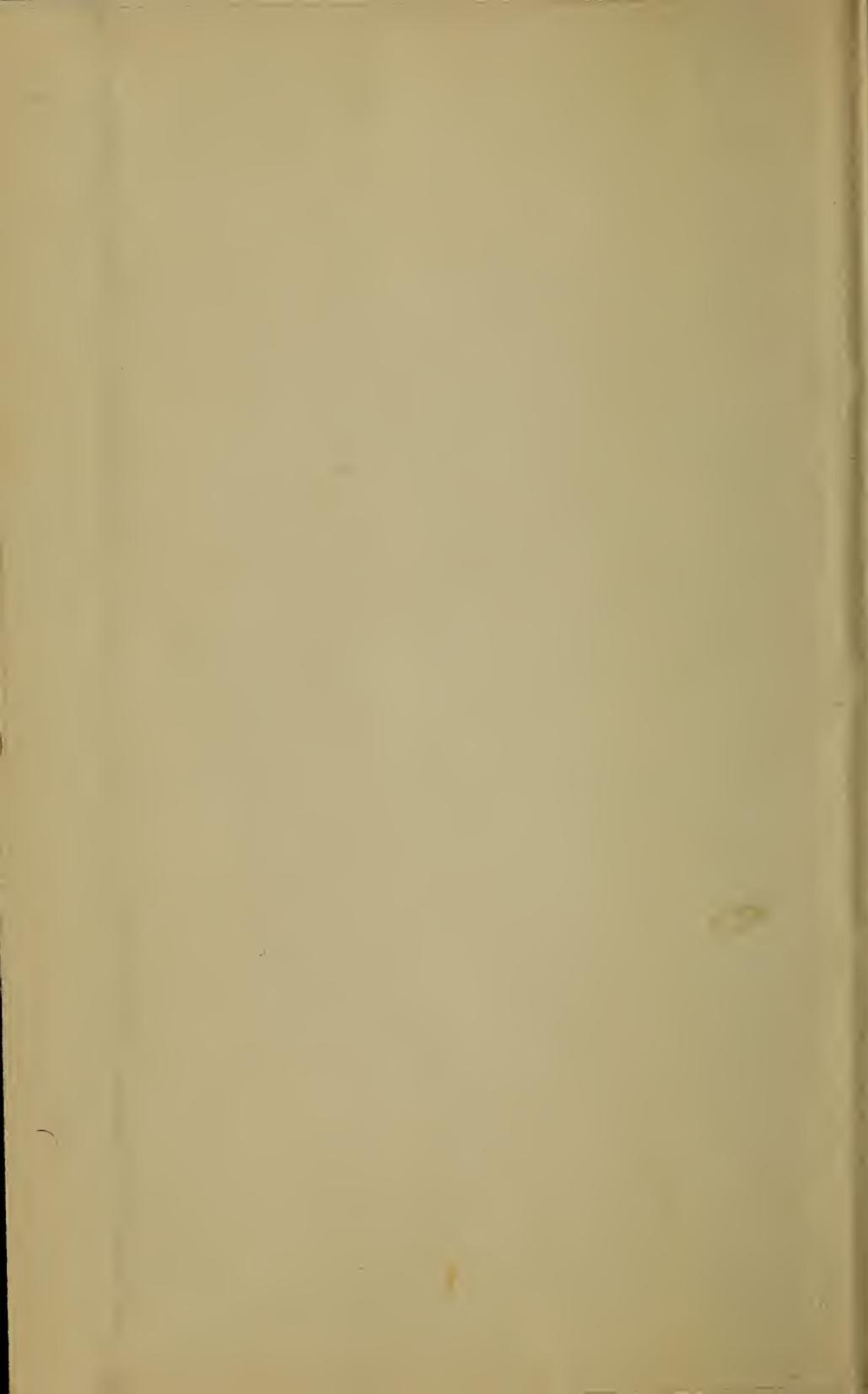


A
NEW CATECHISM
OF
SACRED HISTORY.

BY MRS. J. SADLIER.

NEW YORK:
D. & J. SADLIER & Co., 31 Barclay-St.;
BOSTON, 123 Federal-St.; MONTREAL,
Cor. Notre Dame and St.
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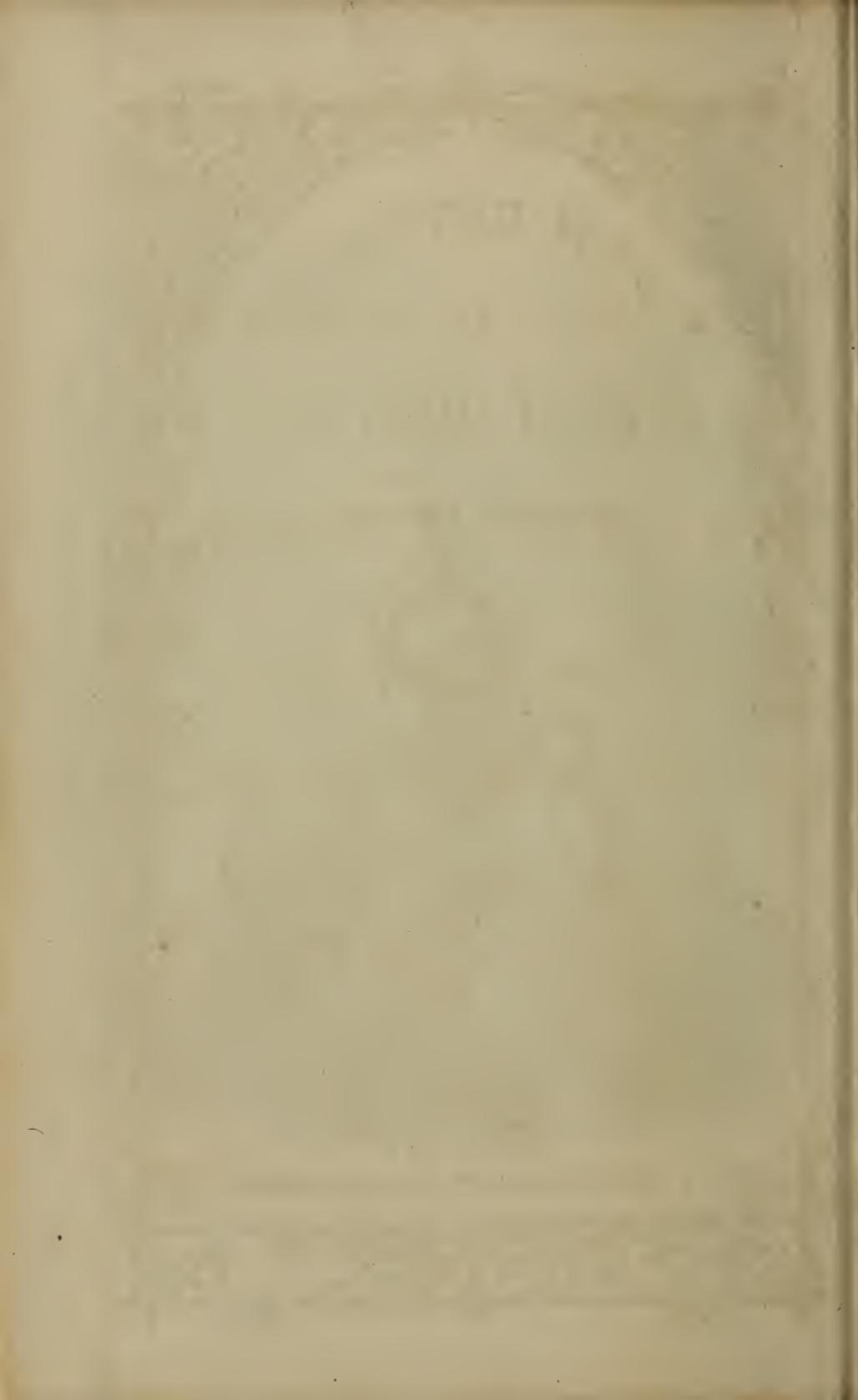
ANNA'S OFFERING OF SAMUEL.

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*Adopted by the Provincial of the Christian Brothers, for use
in the Schools under his charge.*

A

NEW CATECHISM

OF

SACRED HISTORY;

COMPILED FROM AUTHENTIC SOURCES,

FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

Mary Anne Sadlier

BY MRS. J. SADLIER.

NEW YORK :

D. & J. SADLIER & CO., 31 BARCLAY-STREET;

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PREFACE.

THE CATECHISM OF SACRED HISTORY now presented to the Catholic public will be found, it is hoped, a useful little book for the lower classes in Catholic schools. There were, it is true, other Catechisms of Sacred History in use in our schools, but none of them answered exactly the purpose for which this was intended, some being too large, and too elaborate for junior classes, whilst others had the answers entirely too long, so as to fatigue the memory of the young learner. The Catechism now offered has been carefully compiled from authentic sources, and has been made as complete a compendium of Sacred History, and in as simple a form, as could well be effected. It will be seen that, in order to complete the history of the New Testament, a short account of the labors and death of the several apostles has been added to the Scriptural narrative, so as to bring out more fully and more clearly the connection between ancient Sacred History, as contained in the Bible, and modern Sacred History, which is that of the Church, commonly called Ecclesiastical History.

NEW YORK, June 22d, 1864.

The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including the names of the authors and the titles of their works. The list is organized in a structured manner, with names and titles separated by commas and semicolons. The text is written in a formal, historical style, typical of a library or archival record.

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CATECHISM OF SACRED HISTORY.

Q. What is Sacred History ?

A. Sacred History is the history of our Religion.

Q. What does Sacred History teach us ?

A. Sacred History teaches us the greatness of God, and the wonders He has wrought for us.

Q. In what book are these wonders recorded ?

A. In the Bible, the most ancient book in the world.

Q. What does God show us in the Bible ?

A. God shows us in the Bible, in a manner equally plain and certain, what He is, what we are, and for what He has created us.

Q. What advantages has Sacred History over Profane History ?

A. Sacred History has two great advantages over Profane History—its certainty, and its antiquity.

Q. In what does the certainty of Sacred History consist ?

A. The certainty of Sacred History consists in that it has been written by Prophets and other holy men inspired of God.

Q. In what does the antiquity of Sacred History consist ?

A. The antiquity of Sacred History consists in its having been written at a much earlier period than any other history.

Q. How do you prove the antiquity of Sacred History ?

A. Because Moses, who was the author of the first books of Sacred History, lived a thousand years before Herodotus, the first writer of Profane History.

Q. What do you understand by the terms, Old and New Testament ?

A. By the Old Testament, I understand the covenant which God made of old with the Israelites, in giving them the law of Moses. By the New Testament, I understand the covenant which Jesus Christ has made, not with one people alone, but with all mankind, in giving them the Gospel Law.

Q. What do these two Testaments together form ?

A. These two Testaments together form the Bible, the most sacred, as it is the most ancient of books.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

FIRST EPOCH,

EMBRACING 1656 YEARS.

Q. How did God create the world ?

A. God created the world of nothing, and by His word alone.

Q. In what space of time did God create the world ?

A. God created the world in six days.

Q. What did God create the first day ?

A. The first day God created light; he said : let there be light, and immediately light was made.

Q. What did God make the second day ?

A. The second day God made the sky, or firmament, to which he gave the name of heaven.

Q. What did God do on the third day ?

A. On the third day, he gathered into one place the waters that covered the earth, and this great collection of waters he called the sea. He then commanded the earth to yield plants and trees of every kind.

Q. What did God make on the fourth day ?

A. On the fourth day he made the sun and moon, and all the stars of the firmament.

Q. What did God create on the fifth day ?

A. On the fifth day, God created the birds that fly in the air, and the fishes that swim in the water.

Q. What did God make on the sixth day ?

A. On the sixth day, after having created the beasts of the earth, God made Adam, the first man, after his own image and likeness, and he gave him dominion over the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea.

Q. How did God create man ?

A. God created man by forming his body of the slime of the earth ; his soul he created by breathing into his nostrils, and he became a living soul.

Q. What is a living soul ?

A. A being capable of knowing and loving God.

Q. Did God create, at that time, any other rational being besides Adam?

A. Yes, God wishing to give Adam a companion, like unto himself, formed Eve, the first woman, and mother of all mankind, of a rib taken from the side of Adam, during a deep sleep which the Lord cast upon him.

Q. In what state were Adam and Eve created?

A. They were created in a state of innocence, and placed in a delightful garden called the Terrestrial Paradise.

Q. Did they remain always there?

A. No, they soon forfeited their right to dwell therein, and were ignominiously expelled from it.

Q. How did Adam and Eve forfeit their right to Paradise?

A. They forfeited their right to Paradise by eating of the forbidden fruit; God had given them permission to eat of the fruit of every tree in the garden, save one, and of that he forbade them to eat, under pain of incurring his displeasure.

Q. Why did God give them this command?

A. He gave it to them in order to test their obedience.

Q. How did they come to transgress the command?

A. The devil, who had already been cast out of heaven in punishment for his rebellious pride, being envious of the happiness of our first parents, resolved, if possible, to destroy them and their posterity.

Q. How did the devil effect his purpose?

A. He appeared to Eve under the figure of a serpent,

and persuaded her—she being the weaker—that if they eat of the forbidden fruit, their eyes should be opened, and they should be as God, knowing good and evil.

Q. Did Eve eat of the fruit?

A. Yes, she eat of it, and persuaded Adam, her husband, to eat of it also, which he did, in order to please his wife.

Q. What followed this violation of God's commandment?

A. Their eyes were, indeed, opened, but in a different way from what they expected; they saw, when too late, the good they had lost, and felt the shame of their transgression.

Q. How did God punish the disobedience of Adam and Eve?

A. God summoned the guilty pair to his presence; reproached them with their crime; cursed the serpent, whom he condemned ever after to creep on the earth, and condemned man to earn his bread, thenceforward, by the sweat of his brow, until he should return to the dust whence he had been taken. Thus was death introduced into the world as the punishment of sin.

Q. What else did God do in punishment of the sin of our first parents?

A. He cursed the earth for their sake, and declared that it should thenceforward bring forth but thorns and thistles; whereas it had before produced of itself all that was necessary for the sustenance of man.

Q. What then befel the unhappy pair?

A. God then drove them out of the terrestrial Para-

dise, and placed at the entrance thereof an angel with a flaming sword, in order to prevent their return thither.

Q. Did God leave our first parents altogether without hope?

A. No; he promised them that of the woman should be born a Saviour, who was to crush the head of the infernal serpent, which means, to destroy the power of the Evil One, and deliver mankind from the bondage of sin.

Q. How long before Christ was that promise made?

A. It was made four thousand and four years before Christ.

Q. What children had Adam and Eve?

A. Adam and Eve had several children, but the Sacred Scripture mentions particularly only three, Cain, Abel, and Seth.

Q. What great crime was committed by Cain, the elder brother?

A. Cain, being jealous of his brother Abel, whose sacrifices he saw were more acceptable to God than his own, conceived a deadly hatred towards him, and killed him, in the year three thousand eight hundred and seventy-six before Christ.

Q. How did God punish him for this heinous crime?

A. By making him a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and the father of a race as wicked as himself. Despairing of forgiveness for his crime, he refused to repent, or have recourse to the Divine mercy, and died impenitent.

Q. What became of the children of Adam after his death?

A. Seth, his third son, succeeded him in the office of Patriarch, and imitated the piety and virtue of his brother Abel. It was his son, Enos, who first began to invoke the Lord by public worship, and Enoch, one of his descendants, lived so holily, that he was taken up alive to heaven, whence he is to be sent at the end of the world, to prepare men for the final coming of the Redeemer.

Q. In what year did this event occur?

A. It occurred in the year three thousand and seventeen before Christ.

Q. Did the race of Seth always continue faithful to the Lord?

A. For a long time they did, and were known on the earth as the children of God; whereas, the descendants of Cain, following in the footsteps of their progenitor, were called the children of men. But in course of time, the two races began to form alliances, and marry one with the other, when the children of Seth soon became corrupted, and forgot the duty they owed to God.

Q. What men were born of these alliances between the two races?

A. Men whom the Scripture calls giants, on account of their enormous stature. They were an exceedingly wicked race of men, and from them, corruption became so general, that God found but one just man on the earth.

Q. Who was this just man ?

A. He was called Noah.

Q. What did the Lord do then to punish the wickedness of the world ?

A. He resolved to destroy all mankind, with the exception of Noah and his family.

Q. How was this accomplished ?

A. The Lord commanded Noah to build an Ark, according to the directions which he gave him. Noah was a hundred years in building the Ark, and during all that time he warned men of the purpose for which it was designed ; but they would not believe him. When the Ark was completed Noah shut himself in it, with his family, consisting of eight persons, and a pair of every species of animal. Then the flood-gates of heaven were opened, and the rain fell for forty days on the earth, and the waters covered the tops of the highest mountains, so that every living thing was destroyed, except those which were in the Ark.

Q. Where did the Ark rest ?

A. The Ark rested on Mount Ararat, in Armenia, when Noah and his family, with all the animals, went out, the earth being again dry ; they had been nearly a year shut up in the Ark.

Q. Of what is the Ark a figure ?

A. The Ark is a figure of the Church, out of which none can be saved.

SECOND EPOCH,

EMBRACING 429 YEARS.

Q. What was Noah's first act on leaving the Ark?

A. Noah's first act was to offer sacrifice to God, in thanksgiving for the great mercy he had shown himself and his family, in saving them from the general destruction of mankind.

Q. Did the Lord accept Noah's sacrifice?

A. He did, and in token thereof he promised Noah that the earth should never again be destroyed by water.

Q. What sign did the Lord give Noah of the perpetual fulfilment of this covenant?

A. The Lord gave Noah, as a sign of the covenant, his bow which he placed in the clouds, and which we call the rainbow, that seeing it, mankind should always remember God's covenant with Noah.

Q. What was the conduct of Noah's sons towards their father?

A. One of them named Cham, acted in such a manner as to draw down on himself his father's malediction, and also that of God. The other two, Sem and Japhet did not participate in his guilt.

Q. What was the particular offence by which Cham incurred the divine displeasure?

A. The particular offence of Cham was ridiculing and despising his father. Noah, having planted a vineyard, when the grapes were gathered in, drank

freely of their juice, and not knowing its effect, became drunk unconsciously, and fell asleep. Cham seeing him in that state, ran to call his brothers, laughing and making merry over the old man's condition.

Q. What did Sem and Japhet?

A. Instead of laughing at their father's situation as their brother had done, they took a cloak and covered him respectfully.

Q. What did Noah, on awaking and being told what had passed?

A. He cursed Cham, in his descendants, and blessed Sem and Japhet in themselves and their posterity.

Q. How were these words of his fulfilled?

A. In the course of some ages, the posterity of Cham, through Canaan his son, were almost entirely cut off, and the remainder reduced to a state of bondage, by the descendants of Sem and Japhet.

Q. What race of men at the present day represent the descendants of Cham and his son Canaan?

A. The African, or negro race, are the lineal descendants of Cham and Canaan.

Q. What great enterprise did the race of Noah undertake before they scattered abroad over the earth from the plains of Mesopotamia, where they had first settled?

A. They undertook to build a mighty tower, high enough to reach to heaven. This was partly to render their name famous in after times, and partly to secure for themselves a safe retreat from any future deluge that might submerge the world. They had already

lost sight of the Almighty's covenant with their father Noah.

Q. Did they succeed in their foolish undertaking?

A. No, Almighty God sent amongst them; when their work was fast progressing, a confusion of tongues which prevented them from understanding each other; they were thus obliged to leave their tower unfinished, and disperse throughout the different countries of the world.

Q. What was this tower called?

A. It was called Babel, a word which means confusion.

Q. Where was it being erected?

A. On the plain of Shinar, near the river Euphrates, in Asia.

Q. In what year did this occur?

A. It occurred two thousand two hundred and forty-seven years before Christ.

Q. Whither did the family of Cham go to settle?

A. The family of Cham went to settle in Egypt, Arabia, and Palestine, the latter receiving the name of Chanaan, from Cham's eldest son, accursed of God.

Q. What great city was built on the river Euphrates by Nimrod the hunter, a descendant of Cham?

A. The city of Babylon, afterwards called the Great, which became in time the seat of a mighty empire.

Q. What countries were occupied by the children of Japhet?

A. The country of Asia Minor, and a large portion of Europe, were occupied by the children of Japhet.

Q. Where did the race of Sem take up their abode?

A. The race of Sem took up their abode in Mesopotamia and Assyria.

Q. What famous city was built on the river Tigris by Assur, of the race of Sem?

A. The city of Nineveh, afterwards the capital of the great Assyrian empire, so called from Assur, its founder.

Q. What celebrated people descended from the patriarch Sem?

A. The Hebrews, or Israelites, also called the Jews.

Q. What remarkable changes took place during this second epoch of the world's history?

A. First, the great decrease in the length of human life. Before the deluge, men lived nearly a thousand years. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and Mathusaleh nine hundred and sixty-nine. After the Deluge, the life of man was shortened by two-thirds.

Q. What other notable change took place?

A. The change of food. Before the Deluge, the fruits of the earth had been the whole subsistence of the human race. During the period of time following on the Deluge, God permitted them to add the flesh of animals to their ordinary food.

Q. How did men live after their dispersion?

A. Men lived for the most part wickedly, and soon forgot even the natural law, following only their own passions. Vice of every kind soon prevailed on the earth, and mankind were again given up to the wickedness of their own hearts.

Q. Did they keep alive amongst them the remembrance of God?

A. They did not. Blinded by the devil and their own evil passions, they turned away from God, their Creator, and began to worship first the sun, moon, and stars, then animals, plants, and even inanimate statues of wood or stone, the work of their own hands.

Q. What did God then do in order to perpetuate true religion on the earth?

A. In order to perpetuate true religion on the earth, God resolved to raise up for himself one particular nation, of whom should be born the promised Saviour; and he chose Abraham, a just man of the race of Sem, to be the head and root of this chosen race.

THIRD EPOCH.

EMBRACING 430 YEARS.

Q. What does the Scripture teach us concerning the calling of Abraham?

A. The Scripture teaches us that Abraham, a descendant of the patriarch Sem, lived at Ur, in Mesopotamia, and unlike the majority of his people, did not fall into idolatry, but adored and served the true God. Hence it was that Almighty God appointed him to be the father of his chosen people, and called him from amongst his idolatrous kindred, to settle in the land of Canaan.

Q. What did the Lord promise Abraham when he called him to go into the land of Canaan ?

A. The Lord promised Abraham, that as a reward for his fidelity, he would make of him a great nation ; that he would bless him, and magnify his name ; and that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

Q. Did Abraham believe the word of God ?

A. Yes, Abraham believed the word of God ; and, trusting implicitly in his divine guidance, departed from his country, and went into the promised land with his wife Sara, and his nephew Lot.

Q. What was Abraham's life in the land of Canaan ?

A. Regarding himself as a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, the holy patriarch continued to live in tents ; but not so his nephew Lot, who imprudently went to take up his abode in Sodom, a wicked and corrupt city.

Q. Did Lot continue to live in peace after his separation from Abraham ?

A. No, the land wherein he had settled was invaded by Codorlahomor king of the Elamites, with three other kings, and Lot with all the chief men of that country, combined their strength to oppose them. A pitched battle was fought between the contending forces, in the valley which is now covered by the waters of the Dead Sea.

Q. Who gained the battle ?

A. The invaders gained the battle, and drove the

people of the country before them into the mountains. They then advanced, plundered the cities, and carried off a number of captives, amongst whom were Lot and his family, with all his flocks and herds.

Q. What did Abraham do when he heard of Lot's misfortune?

A. He immediately gathered together all his servants and all the neighboring shepherds, and pursued the invaders. They came up with them at Dan, and after a sharp conflict, defeated them. Lot was then rescued by his uncle Abraham, and the invaders pursued to Hoba, on the way to Damascus.

Q. By whom was Abraham met on his return home?

A. He was met by the king of Sodom, and by Melchisedech, king of Salem, and a priest of the Lord, who bringing forth bread and wine, offered them in sacrifice, and blessed Abraham, saying—"Blessed be Abraham by the most high God, who created heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God, by whose protection thine enemies are in thy hands."

Q. What did Abraham then do?

A. He gave tithes, or the tenth part, of all the spoils he had taken, to Melchisedech, the priest of God.

Q. What befel Sodom in punishment of its wickedness?

A. It was consumed by fire from heaven.

Q. Can you relate the circumstances preceding the destruction of Sodom?

A. The Lord having apprised Abraham of his intention to destroy Sodom, Abraham, knowing the great mercy of God, besought him to spare the guilty city

in case there were fifty just men found in it; to this the Lord consented, when Abraham again asked if forty just men would not save it. Again the merciful God consented, and even promised, at Abraham's humble supplication, that if ten just men were to be found in Sodom, he would not destroy it.

Q. Were there ten just men found in the city?

A. No, there were not ten just men found in the whole city of Sodom, and accordingly the Lord sent down fire from heaven to consume it off the face of the earth.

Q. How did Lot escape with his family from the flames of Sodom?

A. Two angels, under the appearance of men, came to Sodom in the evening. Lot seeing them, invited them to enter his house and lodge there over night; this charitable act saved him and his family from the general destruction that came upon the doomed city.

Q. What occurred whilst the angels were in Lot's house?

A. Some of the wicked inhabitants of Sodom came to the house for the purpose of insulting the two strangers. Lot going out to dissuade them from their evil purpose, they began to abuse him, and threatened him with bodily harm, when the angels, taking him by the hand, drew him into the house. At the same time they struck with blindness those that were without, so that they were unable to find the door.

Q. What followed?

A. The angels told Lot that they were sent to destroy

Sodom, and that if he had any relatives or friends whom he wished to save he must take them in haste out of the city. Lot went to inform his two intended sons-in-law of what was to happen, but they laughed at him, and would not believe him. Next morning, the angels made Lot leave the city with his wife and daughters, when a shower of brimstone and fire fell from heaven and totally destroyed Sodom, with three other cities, equally guilty. These were called the cities of the Plain.

Q. What befel Lot and his family immediately after their leaving Sodom?

A. They had been warned by the angels not to look back on the accursed city; this injunction was followed by all except Lot's wife who, looking back to see the progress of the flames, was changed into a pillar of salt. This monumental pillar is still recognized by travellers near the shore of the Dead Sea.

Q. In what year was Sodom destroyed?

A. Sodom was destroyed in the year one thousand, eight hundred and ninety-seven, before Christ.

Q. What was the mark of the covenant which God made with Abraham?

A. The mark of the covenant which God made with Abraham was circumcision, a rite ever after observed by the Jews, and by which they were distinguished from all the other races of men.

Q. Why is Abraham styled father of the faithful?

A. Abraham is styled father of the faithful on ac-

count of his great faith which made him believe because God told him, what was contrary to all appearance, that he should be the father of a great people, out of which the Messiah was to come.

Q. Who was Ishmael?

A. Ishmael was the son of Abraham, by a second wife who was a bondswoman of his wife Sara. In those early days when the world was still but thinly populated, even the holy patriarchs were allowed to have more than one wife.

Q. Was Ishmael the son promised to Abraham, from whose race the Messiah was to spring?

A. No, that promised son was Isaac, miraculously born to Abraham of his wife Sara, in her old age.

Q. Did Ishmael and his mother, Agar the bondswoman, continue to dwell in Abraham's tents?

A. No, Sara having seen Ishmael treat her son unkindly while they played together, requested Abraham to send the boy and his mother away, which he did, in order to preserve the peace of his household.

Q. What befel Agar and Ishmael in the desert whither they retired?

A. Whilst wandering in the desert, and after having exhausted the provisions given them by Abraham at their departure, Agar and her son were in danger of perishing for want of food and water, when an angel appeared to the unhappy mother, and causing a fountain to spring up out of the sand, gave her bread, and told her to take her son and be careful of him, for that he should be the father of a great people.

Q. What people are the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael?

A. The Arab tribes of the desert, who still live in tents, and lead to-day the wandering life which their father Ishmael led of old.

Q. How did God try Abraham's faith?

A. God tried Abraham's faith by commanding him to take his only son, Isaac, to the top of Mount Moria, where the temple of Jerusalem was afterwards built, and there sacrifice him to the Lord.

Q. Did Abraham obey this so harsh command?

A. Yes, Abraham obeyed without any hesitation, and taking his son to the mountain, he caused him to carry up its steep side the wood that was to make the fire for consuming the victim. Isaac was thus a figure of Christ bearing his cross up the hill of Calvary.

Q. Did Abraham complete the sacrifice?

A. No; when he had bound his son and laid him on the altar, ready to strike him dead, a voice from heaven told him not to slay his son, for that God, well pleased with his submission, had provided a victim; turning round, Abraham saw a ram with his horns entangled in the bushes, and him he sacrificed instead of his son.

Q. How was Abraham rewarded for his submission to the divine will?

A. He was rewarded by a renewal of the promise made to him so long before, that the Saviour of the world should be born of his race.

Q. In what way did Abraham and the other patriarchs live?

A. They lived as shepherds and husbandmen, having

abundance of flocks and herds, and living in great plenty, but, at the same time with great frugality and simplicity. They were entirely independent of any earthly power, subject only to God, each family or tribe forming in itself a little state, whereof the father was head, and ruled as king.

Q. Who was the wife of Isaac?

A. Rebecca, the grand-daughter of Nachor, Abraham's brother. Abraham would not permit his son to marry amongst the Canaanites, so he sent his servant Eliezer to Mesopotamia to seek a wife for him of his own kindred.

Q. What children were born of this marriage?

A. The children born of this marriage were two sons, called Esau and Jacob.

Q. Did these two sons of Isaac live in brotherly friendship when they grew to manhood?

A. No; Esau the elder conceived a deadly hatred against Jacob his brother, because Jacob, by a stratagem, robbed him of his father's blessing, after first depriving him of his birthright.

Q. How did Jacob deprive Esau of his birthright?

A. Esau, being a hunter, returned one day from the field, and found his brother Jacob preparing for himself a mess of pottage, which Esau, being hungry, wished to share; Jacob, however, refused to give his brother the mess of pottage, unless he sold him his birthright, which Esau consented to do, saying, "Lo, I die, what will the birthright avail me?"

Q. How did Jacob manage to obtain the paternal blessing, instead of Esau, who was their father's favorite?

A. Esau was told by his father to go out hunting, and bring him of the venison he took to make a savory mess thereof, promising him his blessing when he brought him the meat; for he knew he was soon to die. Rebecca hearing this, and loving Jacob more than Esau, prepared some venison in the way that Isaac desired, gave it to Jacob, and told him to take it to his father, who, being blind, was made to believe that Esau, not Jacob, knelt before him. He, therefore, gave his blessing to Jacob.

Q. What did Esau, on his return?

A. Finding that Jacob had fraudulently obtained the blessing that was meant for him, he was much enraged, and made a resolution to kill his brother after their father's death.

Q. How was Jacob saved from his brother's anger?

A. He was saved by the prudent care of his mother Rebecca, who, having learned Esau's design, sent her younger son to dwell for a time with her brother Laban, in Mesopotamia.

Q. How was Jacob employed while in that country?

A. He was employed in tending the flocks of his uncle Laban, who gave him in marriage first his daughter Leah, then his younger daughter Rachel, whom Jacob loved most tenderly.

Q. How many sons had Jacob, also called Israel?

A. Jacob had twelve sons, from whom are descended

the twelve tribes of Israel. These sons were named Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Dan, Juda, Nephtali, Gad, Aser, Issachar, Zabulon, Joseph, and Benjamin. After remaining twenty years in Mesopotamia, Jacob returned with his whole family into the land of Canaan.

Q. What happened to Jacob on his return home?

A. His brother Esau, hearing of his approach, went to meet him with four hundred armed men. Unable to encounter such a force, Jacob was at first alarmed; but in a vision of the night an angel came and wrestled with him, leaving him the victory. The angel, therefore, gave him the name of Israel, which signifies *strong against God*, telling him at the same time that he who prevailed against God need not fear men.

Q. What effect had this vision on Jacob?

A. It encouraged him to meet his brother, whom before he had so much feared; and, indeed, when Esau beheld his brother Jacob advancing towards him, his hatred died away, and he saw in him only his long lost brother returning to his home.

Q. At what time did Jacob return from Mesopotamia to the land of Canaan?

A. One thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine years before Christ.

Q. How old was Isaac when he died?

A. An hundred and eighty years. He was buried by his sons, Esau and Jacob, in the family burial-place, at Mambre, near Hebron, which Abraham had bought, and where he and Sara, his wife, were already buried.

Q. What was Esau's history after his father's death?

A. After the death of Isaac Esau removed with his family and all the wealth he possessed, to Seir, the country around which was called from him Idumea, or Edom, which signifies red, and was the name given him from the color of the pottage for which he sold his birthright.

Q. Was Esau prosperous in his undertakings?

A. Yes; he became rich and powerful; his sons were styled dukes, and a number of kings of his race reigned in Edom, before the kingdom of Israel was established.

Q. What remarkable personage is supposed to have been a descendant of Esau?

A. The holy man Job, known to all times and nations as the model of patience, is supposed to have been a king of Edom, of the race of Esau.

Q. Which of his twelve sons did Jacob love the most?

A. Joseph, the son of Rachel, his best beloved wife; Joseph and Benjamin were the sons of Jacob's old age; Joseph, the elder of the two, being born when his father was ninety years old.

Q. Why did the other sons of Jacob hate Joseph?

A. Because of his being their father's favorite, and also because of certain dreams which he related to them, denoting his future superiority.

Q. How did they revenge themselves on Joseph?

A. When Joseph was sixteen years of age, his father sent him to a field at some distance from home, where

his brethren were tending their flocks. When they saw him coming they determined to kill him, hoping thus to prevent the fulfillment of his dreams.

Q. Did they accomplish their evil purpose ?

A. No ; on the interposition of Reuben, the elder brother, they threw him into a pit, and, a little while after, Reuben being absent, they sold him to some Egyptian merchants who chanced to pass that way.

Q. How did Joseph's brethren represent the matter to their father ?

A. They dipped the boy's coat in the blood of a kid, and, taking it home, told their father that a wild beast had devoured Joseph.

Q. How did the Egyptian merchants dispose of Joseph ?

A. They sold him to Potiphar, an officer in the household of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Q. What befel Joseph in the house of Potiphar ?

A. He was falsely accused of a great crime, and thrown into prison.

Q. What happened to him whilst in prison ?

A. It so happened that the king's chief butler and chief baker were both in prison at the same time. Each of them had a remarkable dream, which they asked Joseph to interpret. He did accordingly, and what he predicted from those dreams came to pass exactly as he had foretold. The chief baker was hung and the chief butler restored to his place in the king's household.

Q. How did Joseph obtain his release from prison?

A. Some time after the chief butler's release, it so happened that king Pharaoh himself had some strange dreams, which he could find no one amongst all his wise men to interpret. The butler then remembered Joseph, and told the king of what had occurred while he was in prison. Joseph being sent for, interpreted the king's dreams so wisely and satisfactorily that the king regarded him with great favor.

Q. What did Pharaoh's dreams denote, according to Joseph's interpretation?

A. They denoted seven years of great plenty, during which the earth was to bring forth abundant harvests, and after that seven years of famine.

Q. What did Joseph advise Pharaoh to do?

A. He advised him to appoint a wise governor over the land, who would provide during the years of plenty, so that when the famine came the people might have wherewith to support life.

Q. Whom did Pharaoh appoint as governor?

A. He appointed Joseph governor of Egypt, and gave him his own ring in token of the authority wherewith he invested him.

Q. What precautions did Joseph take in order to provide against the approaching famine?

A. During the seven years of plenty he gathered into the king's granaries the fifth part of the country's produce. This wise measure saved Egypt from the cruel effects of the seven years' sterility.

Q. Was the famine confined to Egypt ?

A. No ; it extended over the neighboring countries, and people came from all directions into Egypt to purchase grain. Amongst others, the patriarch Jacob was obliged to send his sons into Egypt, to obtain corn at the royal granaries.

Q. How did Joseph treat his brethren ?

A. He treated them at first as though they were strangers, in order to ascertain what their dispositions were. He pretended to take them for spies, and threw them into prison, where they remained three days.

Q. How did the sons of Jacob receive this misfortune ?

A. They were struck with terror, and humbling themselves before God, confessed that they had deserved all that might come upon them, because of their cruelty and perfidy towards their brother Joseph.

Q. What did Joseph then ?

A. Having understood what his brothers said to each other, although they knew it not, he was much moved by their repentance, and hearing from them that they had at home an aged father and a young brother, released them from prison, with the exception of Simeon, whom he retained as a hostage, and giving them the corn for which they had come, he caused the money they paid him to be put in the mouths of their sacks, and sent them home, charging them to bring back with them their younger brother, Benjamin, as a proof of the truth of their assertions.

Q. What followed ?

A. Opening their sacks on the way home, Joseph's

brethren were much troubled to find the gold therein; going home, they told their father all that had happened, and how Simeon was kept as a hostage by the governor of Egypt, until they should return with Benjamin. The old man was much grieved at what he heard, and declared that he would never permit Benjamin to leave him, fearing lest evil should befall him like his brother Joseph.

Q. Did Jacob keep this resolution?

A. No; the following year, when all the corn brought from Egypt was eaten up, and the famine still continued, Jacob was forced to permit Benjamin to go with his brethren into Egypt, so that a fresh supply might be obtained, and their brother Simeon released from prison.

Q. What did Joseph when they returned with Benjamin?

A. He released Simeon; invited them to eat at his own table, and treated them with marked distinction, especially Benjamin, his brother by the same mother; but when they were leaving, Joseph ordered his silver cup to be placed in Benjamin's sack, as he wished to give his brethren one more trial.

Q. How did Joseph's brethren receive the honors paid them?

A. They were much astonished by the treatment they received, and knew not what to think of it; they were still more amazed when, having gone a little way on their homeward journey, they were overtaken by a messenger from the governor of Egypt, charging them with having stolen his master's silver cup.

Q. What happened then?

A. The sons of Jacob were sorely troubled by such an accusation, and told the officer to search their sacks, saying, that if the cup were found in any of them, the owner thereof should remain as the king's slave. They were all brought back as prisoners.

Q. What happened when the cup was found in Benjamin's sack?

A. His brethren were grieved beyond measure, and one of them, Juda, who had gone security to their father for the boy's safe return, declared that he would remain in captivity in Benjamin's place, as he could not bear to return without him to their aged father.

Q. What was the consequence?

A. Joseph hearing this was so much affected, that he resolved to discover himself at once to his brethren; and sending all others from the room, he told them that he was their brother Joseph, whom they had sold into Egypt. Hearing thus they were sore afraid, but Joseph told them to fear nothing, for that in what had befallen him, he saw only the hand of God, who had thus sent him before them into Egypt, to save them all from perishing by hunger.

Q. What else did Joseph say?

A. He told his brethren that five years of famine were yet to come, and that they must return home and bring their father, with their wives and children, and all that was theirs, and settle in the land of Egypt, where he would provide abundantly for their support, and that of their flocks and herds.

Q. What did Pharaoh when he heard that Joseph's brethren had arrived, and that his father still lived in Canaan?

A. He commanded Joseph to send immediately for his father and all his kindred, promising that they should be well provided for in Egypt. In order to expedite their journey, he ordered wagons to be sent for the women and children.

Q. How did Jacob receive the intelligence that his son Joseph still lived?

A. At first he refused to believe it, but on seeing the wagons and the rich presents sent him from Egypt, he was convinced, and being eager to see again his most beloved son, prepared at once to set forward on his journey.

Q. What occurred to Jacob, or Israel, on his way to Egypt?

A. He had offered sacrifices to the Lord, at a place called Bersabee, when, having fallen asleep, he had a vision, and heard the voice of God saying, "I am the most mighty God of thy father; fear not, go down into Egypt, for I will make a great nation of thee there. I will go down with thee thither, and will bring thee back again from thence; Joseph also shall put his hands on thy eyes."

Q. What was the number of Jacob's family when they entered into Egypt?

A. They numbered seventy souls.

Q. Where did Joseph meet his father?

A. He met him at Gessen, the place intended by Joseph for the dwelling of his kindred, and of which Jacob was put in possession by order of the king.

Q. Relate what passed between Jacob and the king ?

A. When Joseph brought his father, the old shepherd, to present him to the king, Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and the king asked him, "How many are the days of the years of thy life?" and Jacob answered, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years, few and evil; and they are not come up to the days of the pilgrimage of my fathers."

Q. How long did Jacob live after going to dwell in Egypt ?

A. Seventeen years; he was one hundred and forty-seven years old when he died, after blessing his sons and their descendants.

Q. To which of his sons did Jacob give his choicest and most special blessing ?

A. To Juda and Joseph. To the former, he promised that his seed should hold dominion over all the others, and that from it should spring the desired of nations, meaning the promised Messiah. To Joseph he assigned a double portion, and blessed and adopted his two sons, more especially Ephraim the younger.

Q. Why was it not to Reuben, his eldest son, that Jacob promised such great things ?

A. Because Reuben had forfeited his birthright by his sins.

Q. Did Joseph execute all his father's commands ?

A. Yes, he had his body embalmed after the manner of the Egyptians, and when the seventy days allotted for mourning had expired, he conveyed it with great pomp to the land of Canaan, where it was interred, by

the side of Rachel's grave, according to the patriarch's last injunction.

Q. What did Joseph's brethren fear, after their father's death?

A. They feared that Joseph would punish them for their former iniquity, now that their father was dead.

Q. How did Joseph re-assure them?

A. He wept, and told them not to fear, for that great good, instead of evil, had come to him through their act, and that he had been made the saviour of many; he also renewed his promises of protection to them and their families. In this conduct of the holy patriarch Joseph, we find an admirable example of that divine virtue, forgiveness of injuries, and returning good for evil.

Q. What did Joseph prophesy to his brethren a little before his death?

A. He prophesied that God would visit them after his death, and put them in possession of the land which he had promised to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Q. What promise did he require of them?

A. That they would carry his bones with them when they went to take possession of the promised land.

Q. How old was Joseph at the time of his death?

A. He was a hundred and ten years old, eighty years of which he had been governor of Egypt.

Q. What have you to remark of Joseph?

A. That he is considered one of the types of our divine Lord, of whom several are found under the old

dispensation. The principal circumstances of Joseph's life correspond exactly, but of course figuratively, with the life of our blessed Redeemer.

Q. What befel the children of Israel after Joseph's death ?

A. Pharaoh the friend of Joseph having died also, there was a new king in Egypt, and he being jealous of their rapid increase in numbers and in riches, treated them with great severity, endeavoring to repress their growth as a nation, by the heavy burdens he imposed upon them.

Q. Did he succeed in weakening them by these means ?

A. No, on the contrary, the more Pharaoh oppressed them, the more a great deal did Almighty God prosper and strengthen them.

Q. What did Pharaoh do, on seeing this ?

A. He commanded the Egyptian midwives to kill all the male children of the Hebrews as soon as they were born ; but finding that this cruel order was not generally obeyed, he decreed that all the male children of the Hebrews should be drowned in the river Nile.

Q. What remarkable Hebrew personage was rescued when an infant, from the waters of the Nile ?

A. Moses, whom the Lord had appointed to be the deliverer of his people from Egyptian bondage.

Q. How was Moses preserved ?

A. His mother had succeeded in hiding the infant for three months after his birth, but finding that she could not much longer hope to conceal him, she made a basket of bulrushes, which she carefully cemented so

as to keep out the water, and placed it, with her infant in it, amid the long grass by the river side, sending his sister to keep watch over the child at a little distance. The basket and its precious contents were discovered by the king's daughter, who had gone thither to bathe with her maidens, and by her pitying kindness the future law-giver of Israel was saved.

Q. What did the princess do, on discovering the child?

A. She desired the sister of Moses, who then came forward, to procure her a nurse, whereupon the girl ran for her mother, to whose care the infant was entrusted, the princess adopting him as her son, and giving him the name of Moses.

Q. Where did Moses spend the earlier portion of his life?

A. The first forty years of his life he spent at the court of Pharaoh, where, as the adopted son of the king's daughter, he was instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians, who were then, and for many ages after, the most polished nation on the earth.

Q. What was the cause of his leaving Egypt?

A. He fled from Egypt, fearing the wrath of Pharaoh, because he had killed an Egyptian, whom he saw striking a Hebrew.

Q. Whither did Moses retire?

A. To the country of the Madianites, where he found Jethro, a priest of the true God, to whom he attached himself, and having married his daughter Sephora, had by her two sons, named Gersam and Eliezer.

Q. How long did Moses remain in Madian ?

A. He remained there forty years, when he was admonished from on high in a miraculous manner to return to Egypt.

Q. Relate the occurrence.

A. Moses having charge of the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, had driven them far into the desert, in the vicinity of Mount Horeb, when suddenly the Lord appeared to him in a burning bush, and commanded him to go back into Egypt, to deliver his people from the hands of Pharaoh.

Q. Of what was this burning bush a type ?

A. It was a type of the blessed Virgin, inasmuch as though all on fire with the brightness of God, who was present in it, it yet was not consumed.

Q. What answer did Moses make ?

A. He said : " Who am I, that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt ? " He further asked : " What shall I say to the children of Israel, if, when I tell them that the God of their fathers sent me, they should ask his name ? "

Q. What did God reply ?

A. He replied : " I Am who Am. You shall say to the children of Israel, ' He who is hath sent me to you ! ' " And again, " The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you. "

Q. Did Moses still hesitate ?

A. Yes ; he still feared that the Hebrew people

would not believe in the commission he had received, but the Lord, to strengthen and encourage him, gave him two miraculous signs.

Q. What were these signs?

A. He told him to cast the rod he held in his hand upon the ground, when it was changed into a serpent; then telling him to take it up by the tail, it became again a rod. The Lord further commanded Moses to put his hand into his bosom, when, drawing it out, it was covered with leprosy; then, being told to put it again in his bosom, it was healed. He added: "If they will not believe the former sign, they will believe the latter; but if they will not believe either, take water out of the river, and pour it out, when it shall be turned into blood."

Q. What did Moses still plead?

A. That he was slow of speech, and unfit to go upon such a mission. And God said to him: "Who made man's mouth, or who made the dumb and the deaf, the seeing and the blind? did not I? Go, therefore, and I will be in thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak."

Q. Did Moses still object?

A. Yes; his humility was so great that he could not be persuaded, even by God himself, of his fitness to undertake so important a mission, when the Lord, compassionating his weakness, told him that his brother Aaron, being more eloquent than he, should address the people for him, and that He himself would be with both.

Q. What else did the Lord say to Moses?

A. He told him to take the rod in his hand, and work signs with it before Pharaoh, and to go without fear, as all who sought his life were dead.

Q. Did Moses then consent?

A. Yes, taking his wife and his two sons with him, he returned to Egypt, accompanied by his brother Aaron, who met him on the way by the divine command.

Q. How old was Moses when he thus undertook the deliverance of the Hebrews?

A. He was eighty years old.

Q. What did Moses and Aaron first do when they returned to Egypt?

A. They called together all the ancients of Israel, and Aaron told them all that the Lord had said to Moses, and he wrought the signs before all the people.

Q. Did the people believe?

A. They did; and falling down they adored the Lord God of Israel, who in mercy had visited his people.

Q. What did Moses and Aaron then do?

A. They went straight to the presence of the king, and told him: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: 'Let my people go, that they may sacrifice to me in the desert.'"

Q. What was Pharaoh's answer?

A. "Who is the Lord, that I should hear his voice and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither shall I let Israel go."

Q. What did Aaron then do ?

A. In order to convince Pharaoh of the power of the Hebrews, he cast the rod of Moses on the ground, when it was changed into a serpent.

Q. Did this miracle convince the king ?

A. No ; he called his magicians, and they casting their rods on the ground, they also became serpents.

Q. What followed ?

A. Aaron's rod devoured those of the magicians, whose power was thus set at nought.

Q. Did Pharaoh still refuse to allow the Israelites to depart ?

A. He did ; and the oppression of the Israelites still increasing, Almighty God smote the Egyptians with ten successive plagues, in order to compel Pharaoh to let his people go forth.

Q. What was the last of these plagues ?

A. The death, in one night, of the first-born of every Egyptian family, from that of Pharaoh himself to the humblest of his subjects, and likewise the first-born of all beasts.

Q. Were the Israelites involved in this calamity ?

A. No, they were miraculously preserved, by sprinkling with the blood of the Paschal Lamb the upper and side door-posts of their dwellings.

Q. How was the memory of this wonderful deliverance perpetuated amongst the Hebrews ?

A. By the yearly observance of the festival called the pasch or passover ; this festival is still solemnised by the Jews in every part of the world. By Christians

it is regarded as the type of the great pasch of the New Law, the adorable sacrament of Christ's body and blood, as the Paschal Lamb was itself a figure of our divine Redeemer, through whose blood mankind is alone saved from perdition.

Q. What effect had this awful visitation on the Egyptians ?

A. When at midnight the cry of death went forth all over Egypt, Pharaoh and his people, in their mortal terror of the Hebrews' God, urged Moses to depart immediately with the children of Israel, and all that belonged to them. All that they asked of gold, silver, and raiment was likewise given them, in order to expedite their departure, and propitiate their terrible God.

Q. What was then the number of the Hebrew people ?

A. Six hundred thousand men they marched out of Egypt, besides women and children.

Q. What did they carry with them ?

A. The bones of the holy patriarch Joseph, which, according to his dying injunction, they meant to bury in the land of Canaan, with those of his father Jacob and his mother Rachel.

Q. How long had the race of Israel sojourned in Egypt ?

A. Four hundred and thirty years, reckoning from the time of Abraham's first going thither, when called to leave his home and kindred in Mesopotamia.

Q. In what year did this event take place ?

A. In the year of the world, 2453.

FOURTH EPOCH,

FROM THE DELIVERANCE OF THE JEWS OUT OF EGYPT, COMMONLY CALLED THE JEWISH EXODUS, TO THE FOUNDATION OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

Q. What command did God give the Israelites on their departure from Egypt.

A. To solemnise every year the feast of the passover in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and to consecrate to him their first-born sons, and the first-born of every beast.

Q. How did God conduct the Israelites through the desert?

A. By a pillar of cloud which moved before them during the day, and a pillar of fire during the night.

Q. Did Pharaoh repent of having allowed them to depart?

A. He did, and assembling a mighty army of horse and foot, with six hundred chariots, he set out in pursuit of the children of Israel.

Q. Where were the Israelites when they found Pharaoh approaching?

A. They were encamped on the banks of the Red Sea, which lay between them and the Land of Promise. They were terrified by the sight of the Egyptian army advancing rapidly, and began to murmur against Moses for having led them out into the desert.

Q. How did Moses act in this trying emergency?

A. He told the people not to fear, for that God was about to work great wonders on their behalf.

Q. What happened then?

A. The angel of the Lord who had hitherto guided the children of Israel, in their march through the desert, moved to the rear and stood between them and the Egyptian hosts, while Moses, by the command of God, stretched his rod over the sea, and immediately the sea dividing, left a dry passage, through which the Hebrews marched, the water standing like a wall on either side.

Q. What then befel the Egyptians?

A. They rushed forward at Pharaoh's bidding, between the walls of water, expecting to cross the Red Sea by the passage that had been opened for the flying Hebrews; but no sooner had the host of Israel reached the farther shore in safety, than the Lord commanded Moses to stretch his rod again over the sea, and immediately the waters closing in, buried in their depths the Egyptian king with his mighty army.

Q. What was the first act of Moses and the Israelites on reaching the farther shore?

A. Their first act was to sing, with one accord, a canticle of praise to God, in which Miriam, the sister of Moses, joined, with all the women of Israel.

Q. What was the next remarkable occurrence in the progress of the Israelites through the desert?

A. The people having marched three days without finding any water to drink, came to a place called Mara, where water was to be had, but it was bitter to the taste; they then began to murmur, reproaching Moses, as before, with having led them out to die in the desert.

Q. What did Moses?

A. He prayed God to assist him, and was by him directed to a tree, the wood of which, when thrown into the water, rendered it sweet.

Q. What was the next prodigy wrought for the people of Israel?

A. They had reached the desert of Sin, when they began to murmur, as usual, against Moses and Aaron, because they had no bread. Then Moses and Aaron promised them that the Lord would provide food for them in abundance. That same evening a vast multitude of quails covered the camp, and on the following morning, the ground all around was covered with a white substance called *manna* which had fallen from the heavens during the night; this the Israelites, by the command of Moses, formed into delicious bread.

Q. How long were the children of Israel fed with this manna?

A. Forty years: that is to say, till they eat of the corn of the promised land.

Q. Were the Israelites grateful for this heavenly food?

A. For a time they were, but they soon became dissatisfied at having nothing else to eat, and thought with greedy longing of the flesh-pots of Egypt.

Q. Of what was the manna a type?

A. Of the blessed sacrament of Christ's love, the adorable Eucharist, wherein he gives us the true bread from heaven.

Q. What other prodigy did Moses work for the people of Israel while in the desert?

A. When they were suffering from the want of water in the desert of Raphidim, Moses was commanded by God to strike the rock Horeb with his miraculous rod, and immediately a plentiful stream issued from the hard rock.

Q. What remarkable circumstance took place on another occasion, when the people murmured for want of water?

A. Moses being commanded to strike a rock, struck it twice with his rod, whereat God was angry, because he had seemed to doubt that water would come on the first stroke. In punishment of his momentary hesitation, or want of confidence, the Lord told him and Aaron that they should not lead the people into the land of promise.

Q. What people attacked the Israelites in the desert?

A. The Amalekites, a warlike people, whom they overcame by the prayers of Moses.

Q. Can you tell how this occurred?

A. Moses remained on a hill at a little distance, holding the miraculous rod upraised between his hands; it was observed that when his hands sank lower from fatigue, the Amalekites seemed to prevail, whereupon Aaron and Hur held them up until the battle was gained by the Israelites, and the enemy put to flight.

Q. When and where did God give his law to the Israelites?

A. In the third month after their going forth from

Egypt, the law was given them from the top of Mount Sinai, amid thunder and lightning that struck the people with fear. This was in the design of God, to fill them with awe of his almighty power, and make them dread the consequences of disobedience. With the sound of trumpet, the Lord himself proclaimed his Ten Commandments.

Q. What did the people in their terror?

A. Lying prostrate on the ground, afraid to raise their eyes, they begged of Moses to speak alone with God, and that they would faithfully observe the Commandments transmitted through him. They could not bear to hear the voice of God, or behold the awful splendor of the scene.

Q. Did Moses go up accordingly to the mountain?

A. He did, and remained there in communion with God forty days and forty nights, during which he neither ate nor drank.

Q. How were the people engaged during his absence?

A. They already forgot the invisible God who had wrought such wonders for them, and compelled Aaron, to make them of the ornaments worn by their wives and daughters, a golden calf, to worship as an idol, around which they danced and sang, crying, "These be thy Gods, O Israel, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt!" Thus were they occupied when Moses descended from the mountain with the law of God, written on two tables of stone.

Q. What did Moses on seeing this shameful sight?

A. He threw down the tables of the law, which

were broken to pieces in the fall. The idol he seized, and having bruised and beaten it to powder, so as to show the unhappy idolaters what manner of idol they had been worshipping, he put the powder into water, of which he made the people drink. Then sternly rebuking Aaron for conniving at their wicked folly, he called on all who still remained faithful to the Lord, to range themselves beside him.

Q. Who were they that did so?

A. The whole tribe of Levi, to which Moses and Aaron belonged.

Q. What did Moses then do?

A. He commanded the sons of Levi to draw their swords, and march through the camp to and fro, putting to death every soul they met on their way.

Q. How many of the idolatrous Hebrews perished that day?

A. About twenty-three thousand. These were slain to expiate the sin of all.

Q. What did Moses then do?

A. He prostrated himself before God, beseeching him to pardon the sins of his people, and renew his covenant with them.

Q. Did God hear his supplication?

A. He did; and commanded him to hew two other tables of stone, and to take them up to the mountain, where the finger of God again wrote the Commandments, and Moses remained forty days and forty nights as before.

Q. What change was visible in Moses after this his second descent from the mountain?

A. His face shone with such resplendent brightness, that the people feared to look upon him, and he covered his face with a veil, which he wore ever after, except when he went to communicate with God in the Tabernacle.

Q. What was the first act of Moses on coming down from the mount?

A. To have the people commence the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle, according to the directions given him by God.

Q. What was the Ark of the Covenant?

A. It was a box composed of the most precious woods, covered within and without with the purest gold. In it were kept the ten Commandments, or the new covenant of God with men.

Q. What was the Tabernacle?

A. A portable tent, all covered with the richest stuffs. It was divided into two parts, the inner of which was called the Holy of Holies, and in it was placed the Ark of the Covenant.

Q. What tribe was appointed by God to take charge of the Tabernacle, and all that belonged to the divine service?

A. The tribe of Levi, whom God set apart for himself, instead of the first-born of all the tribes of Israel.

Q. Whom did God choose from the tribe of Levi to minister to him as priests?

A. He chose Aaron and his sons to be his priests for ever.

Q. Were the priests distinguished by any particular dress?

A. Yes, the Lord himself gave particular directions for making the priestly vestments, some of which were common to all the priests, others to be worn only by the high priest.

Q. Who were Nadab and Abihu, and what was their offence?

A. Nadab and Abihu were the sons of Aaron, priests like himself; their offence was, offering strange fire in their censers, instead of that prepared for the purpose.

Q. What was their punishment?

A. They were instantly struck dead by fire from heaven; and, by the command of Moses, their bodies were thrown outside the camp, clothed as they were, in their priestly garments; moreover, their father and their brethren were not permitted to mourn for them.

Q. Where was sacrifice alone to be offered?

A. Before the door of the Tabernacle, and by the hands of the priest.

Q. When the children of Israel resumed their march for the promised land, did they cease to murmur against God?

A. No, they relapsed again and again into the same state of discontent; on one of these occasions, a fire was sent from heaven that consumed a great number. Mary, or Miriam, the sister of Moses, was stricken with leprosy for the same offence, but was healed at the prayer of Moses, after seven days' banishment from the camp.

Q. What did Moses as the Israelites approached the promised land?

A. He sent thither twelve spies to bring him back a description of the country, and what they saw there.

Q. What followed?

A. Although the spies gave a most favorable account of the land, its beauty and fertility, they all except two, Josue and Caleb, represented the inhabitants as a most fierce and formidable people, which so frightened the timid children of Israel that they feared to enter the land of promise, declared they would rather die in the wilderness, and talked of returning to Egypt.

Q. What did the Lord then threaten?

A. In punishment of their obstinacy and ingratitude, he threatened to slay the entire people by pestilence, but at the intercession of Moses, he forgave them, condemning them, nevertheless, to wander forty years in the desert, adding that none of them save two, Josue and Caleb, should enter the land of promise, but that their children should take possession of it.

Q. How were the ten spies punished who had given a false account of the state of things in the promised land?

A. They were punished by sudden death.

Q. Did the Israelites, repenting of their folly, attempt to enter the promised land?

A. They did, but acting contrary to the declared will of God, they were defeated with great slaughter.

Q. What was the schism of Core, Dathan, and Abiron?

A. Core, a Levite, with Dathan and Abiron of the

tribe of Reuben, and two hundred and fifty of the chief men of Israel, came together, and demanded to know why Moses and Aaron assumed to themselves so great power over the people.

Q. What did Moses do to quell their sedition?

A. He rebuked Core, for that he being a Levite, should murmur at a distinction which did honor to his whole tribe; he sent for Dathan and Abiron, but they refused to obey the summons; he then ordered Core with his two hundred and fifty adherents, to come forward next day with their censers in their hands, and that Aaron also being present with his censer the Lord would show whom he had chosen for the priestly office.

Q. What was the result?

A. When Core and his followers assembled next day, and the two hundred and fifty offered incense, a fire from heaven consumed them all, and the earth opening under the tents of Core, Dathan, and Abiron, they were swallowed up alive with all that belonged to them, except the sons of Core, who not having joined in their father's schism, were miraculously preserved.

Q. Did the effects of Core's schism end here?

A. No, on the following day, the people accused Moses and Aaron of having caused the death of all who perished on the previous day, whereupon the Lord sent down fire from heaven which destroyed fourteen thousand seven hundred persons, and was only stopped in its destructive fury by Aaron offering incense, and praying between the living and the dead.

Q. What punishment was inflicted by God's command on an Israelite who was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day?

A. He was stoned to death, for his violation of the law of God.

Q. For what offence was another man stoned to death?

A. For having blasphemed the holy name of God, contrary to the second commandment.

Q. What do all these examples teach us?

A. They teach us how wicked it is to violate the law of God, and how terrible the punishment due to sin.

Q. What were the chief festivals of the Mosaic law?

A. First, the Pasch, celebrated during the first month, in commemoration of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage; secondly, the feast of Pentecost, fifty days after the Pasch, as a remembrance of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; thirdly, the feast of Tabernacles, in the seventh month, in remembrance of the time spent by the children of Israel in the desert; fourthly, the Sabbath, kept on the seventh day of each week, as a memorial of the Lord's mysterious rest after creating the world in six days.

Q. How did God confirm the priesthood to Aaron and his sons?

A. He commanded Moses to have the prince of each tribe give in a rod marked with his name; these rods were placed over night in the Tabernacle. Next day when the people were all assembled, Moses went into the Tabernacle and brought forth the rods, when that of

Aaron was found covered with leaves, blossoms, and fruit. This was the sign whereby the Lord had promised to distinguish the tribe and the family whom he would have to serve at his altars.

Q. What did the Lord command Moses to do with Aaron's rod?

A. He commanded him to place it in the Tabernacle, as a perpetual memorial to the children of Israel that he had chosen Aaron and his sons for the priesthood.

Q. Where did Aaron die?

A. He died on Mount Hor, on the borders of the land of Edom, in the fortieth year of the Jewish exodus, and the hundred and twenty-third of his age. When he was about to die, Moses went up with him and his eldest son Eleazer to the top of the mountain, and stripping Aaron of the priestly garments, he placed them on Eleazer, whom he then presented to the people as the successor of Aaron.

Q. Did the people murmur again after the death of Aaron?

A. They did; and in punishment of their ingratitude, the Lord sent amongst them fiery serpents, that bit and killed a great number of persons.

Q. How were they delivered from these fiery serpents?

A. By the prayer of Moses, who, on their acknowledging their fault, besought God to have mercy on them; the Lord hearing his prayer, commanded him to make a brazen serpent and set it up in the sight of all the people, that by looking on it they that were bitten should be healed.

Q. Of what was this brazen serpent a figure?

A. It was a very striking figure of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, on the cross, for by him the health of the soul is restored; and it is by raising our eyes to Him that sin, the bite of the infernal serpent, is healed.

Q. Were the Israelites allowed to take peaceable possession of the land of promise, at the end of their forty years' wandering in the desert?

A. No; the Edomites would not allow them to pass through their country, and they were successively attacked by the other pagan nations who dwelt along the borders of the desert. By the divine assistance, however, they overcame all their enemies; and Balak, king of Moab, sent Balaam, a false prophet, to curse them, hoping thereby to deter them from marching onward.

Q. What followed?

A. Balaam was on his journey to do the bidding of the king of Moab, when the ass on which he rode suddenly spoke, and asked him why he beat her for not going on and throwing herself on the ground, since it was through fear of an angel who stood in the way with a drawn sword.

Q. Did Balaam see the angel?

A. He did, when the ass spoke, but not before.

Q. What happened then?

A. Balaam prostrated himself before the angel, and acknowledged his fault, declaring his willingness to return, but the angel permitted him to continue his jour-

ney, on condition that he spoke only what things were commanded him to speak.

Q. Did Balaam curse the Israelites?

A. No; he was forced to bless, instead of cursing them, and prophesied that the Messiah should come from amongst them; that a star should arise out of Jacob, and a sceptre spring up from Israel.

Q. What further took place in connection with the Moabites?

A. By the advice of Balaam, the king of the Moabites succeeded in drawing the Israelites into idolatry, by inducing them to take wives from amongst his people; in punishment of this grievous crime, twenty-four thousand Israelites were struck dead.

Q. How was the remnant of the people saved?

A. By the courage and fidelity of Phineas, son of Eleazer, the high priest, with twelve thousand men chosen by Moses from the twelve tribes; these attacked the idolatrous Moabites, whom they utterly exterminated.

Q. To what tribes did Moses give the country of Moab, and the other lands gained by conquest east of the Jordan?

A. He gave them to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasses (son of Joseph), on condition that they assisted their brethren to take possession of the promised land.

Q. What command did God give the Israelites, through Moses, on their entering the promised land?

A. To make no alliance with any of the inhabitants, whom they were utterly to exterminate, to break their

idols, and cut down the groves which were the scenes of their pagan rites.

Q. When and where did Moses die ?

A. He died on Mount Nebo, within sight of the promised land, just when the Israelites were about to enter and possess it. He was not permitted to enter it, but only to see it from a distance, in punishment of what some might think the trifling fault of striking the rock twice, as elsewhere related.

Q. What did Moses prophesy before his death ?

A. He prophesied the coming of the Messiah.

Q. What had Moses written ?

A. He had written the history of the world and of the Jewish people up to that time, and placed the sacred record in the Ark of the Covenant.

Q. Whom did God appoint to succeed Moses, and to lead his people across the Jordan to the land of promise ?

A. He appointed Josue, a faithful Levite, who had served in the Tabernacle from his early youth, and had been one of the twelve sent forty years before to view the promised land.

Q. How did the people of Israel cross the Jordan ?

A. In the same miraculous manner they had before crossed the Red Sea. By God's command, the priests, carrying the Ark, moved two thousand cubits in advance of the people, and according as the priests touched the water it divided, leaving a dry passage ; when the priests reached the middle of the river, they stood still with the Ark till all had passed over, and as soon as

the Ark was carried to the river's bank, the water flowed again into its wonted channel.

Q. What monument did Josue cause to be erected in remembrance of this prodigy?

A. He caused twelve large stones to be taken from the spot whereon the priests had stood in the middle of the river, and piled together in the midst of the camp, at Galgal in the land of promise.

Q. What place in that country was first taken by the Israelites?

A. The city of Jericho.

Q. How was it taken?

A. By the same miraculous interposition of divine power. The Israelites were instructed to march in procession once a day for six days around the city, the priests bearing the Ark, and on the seventh day to march seven times around it, and shout at a given signal. All this being done accordingly, as they shouted and blew their trumpets the walls of Jericho fell to the ground, and they entered without difficulty.

Q. Were all the inhabitants put to death?

A. All, except a woman named Rahab, with her family, she having saved the lives of the spies sent to view the place.

Q. What remarkable circumstance occurred at the taking of Hai?

A. The Israelites, on attacking it, were at first defeated with some loss, and when Josue complained in prayer that God had forsaken his people, the Almighty

told him that it was because of the sin of one man, who was to be found out by lot next day, and burned, with all that belonged to him.

Q. Who was this man, and what was his offence?

A. His name was Achan, a man of the tribe of Juda, and his offence was that, in violation of the express commandment of God, he had secretly saved for himself at the taking of Jericho, a scarlet robe with some gold and silver, whereas all that belonged to the idolaters should have been destroyed. Being found out by lot he confessed his crime and was put to death, as God had directed.

Q. Was the city then taken?

A. Yes, the Lord, appeased by the death of Achan, delivered it to the Israelites, and permitted them, moreover, to divide its spoils among them.

Q. What did Josue after the taking of Hai?

A. He built an altar of unhewn stone, and offered on it holocausts and peace offerings as Moses had commanded, wrote the law on stone, and divided the country into two districts for the people, placing the Ark in the midst, then repeated for them all the blessings that should come upon them if they remained faithful to the law of him who had done such great things for them, and the curses that should follow their infidelity.

Q. Did the native inhabitants of the land of Canaan submit quietly to the Israelites?

A. No, they all leagued against them, with the single

exception of the Gabaonites, who submitted, and were made by Josue the servants of the Israelites.

Q. Were the other idolatrous nations displeased with the Gabaonites for thus submitting to the Israelites?

A. They were, and combining their forces once more, they made war on the Gabaonites, who sent word to Josue, and that great leader marched to their assistance.

Q. What great miracle occurred during this battle?

A. As the day was well spent, and the victory not yet complete, Josue ordered the sun to stop in his course; the sun obeyed, and stood still in the heavens till Josue had routed the enemy, and cut them to pieces.

Q. Was Josue successful in all his undertakings?

A. Yes, he was so successful that in five years after crossing the Jordan, he had conquered all the hostile nations and the children of Israel rested in peace. Josue then divided the land amongst the nine tribes and the half tribe of Ephraim.

Q. Why was the land divided only amongst nine and a half of the twelve tribes?

A. Because two and a half were already settled beyond the Jordan, and the tribe of Levi had no land apportioned to it, being set apart for the service of God, and supported by the joint offerings of the other tribes.

Q. How did Josue reward the two and a half tribes from

beyond the Jordan, who had assisted their brethren to conquer the promised land?

A. He sent them home with rich presents to their families and possessions.

Q. What did they do on reaching their possessions?

A. They built a high altar as a testimony that they and the tribes beyond the Jordan were one and the same people.

Q. How old was Josue when he died, and how long had he governed the people of Israel?

A. Josue was a hundred and ten years old when he died, and he had governed the Israelites twenty-five years.

Q. Whom did God appoint to lead the Israelites to battle, after the death of Josue?

A. He appointed Caleb, prince of the tribe of Juda, a brave and faithful man, who had been sent with Josue, by Moses, to view the promised land.

Q. How long did the Israelites remain faithful to the Lord after the death of Josue?

A. They remained faithful to the Lord, and to their promise solemnly given to Josue at his death, so long as the ancients lived amongst them who had seen the great wonders of the Lord, but after the death of those venerable men they fell into idolatry like the nations by whom they were surrounded.

Q. What was the consequence of their falling into idolatry?

A. They were visited with many temporal calamities, amongst others by a fierce civil war, in which the

tribe of Benjamin was nearly exterminated, and about one hundred thousand Israelites were cut off; they were also grievously oppressed by the surrounding nations.

Q. By what crime had the Benjamites incurred the special displeasure of God?

A. By entering into a league with the idolatrous Jebusites, for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, burned by Caleb, after a great victory over that people. The city had fallen to the lot of the Benjamites who entered, as we have said, into a league with the people of the country for its re-building.

Q. What form of government did God appoint for the Israelites after they then returned from idolatry?

A. He appointed wise and venerable men, called judges, to rule over Israel.

Q. Who were the principal of these judges?

A. The principal of these judges were, Gideon, Jephtha, Samson, Heli and Samuel.

Q. What remarkable person did the Lord raise up about this time to deliver the Israelites?

A. Deborah, the prophetess, who judged Israel forty years. She had for her general, Barac, a valiant warrior of the tribe of Nephtali, who, with the sublime inspiration of Deborah's prophetic spirit, conquered all the enemies of Israel.

Q. Who was Gideon?

A. He was a man of the tribe of Manasses, of humble origin, but wise and valiant.

Q. What command did Gideon receive from God?

A. To destroy the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove that surrounded it, and to offer holocausts to God.

Q. What did the idolaters of that place when they discovered next day what Gideon had done?

A. They assembled in great numbers, and going to Gideon's house, demanded that his father should give him up, that they might put him to death as an expiation of his crime against their God Baal.

Q. Did Gideon's father consent to give him up?

A. No; he refused to do so, saying, "Let Baal revenge himself, if he be able." On this account, Gideon was surnamed Jerobaal.

Q. What remarkable circumstance occurred on one occasion when Gideon was going forth with the Israelites to encounter a much larger force of idolaters?

A. He besought God to give him as a sign of victory that the fleece he laid on the ground might be saturated with dew, whilst the ground about it remained dry. He found in the morning that his prayer had been granted; but desiring yet another proof, he begged of God that next morning the fleece might be dry, and the ground wet, which was also done as he desired.

Q. What did Gideon then do?

A. Being fully assured by these two miracles that the God of Israel would assist his people, he fearlessly led his army against the enemy's host.

Q. Did God permit Gideon to take his whole army, 32,000 strong?

A. No; being desirous to show the Israelites that it was not by their own strength they conquered, but by his omnipotent power, he only permitted three hundred men to follow Gideon to the field, and this little band routed the immense army of the pagans without a blow, but merely by the continued sounding of their trumpets, their battle-cry being, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

Q. What is related of Jephtha, one of the judges?

A. When called by God to lead the army of Israel against the Ammonites and Philistines, he vowed that if he obtained a victory, he would offer as a holocaust to the God of battles the first who should come forth from his house to meet him on his return.

Q. What was the result?

A. He defeated the enemy with great slaughter, and returning home, it was his only daughter who came forth to meet and welcome him; in fulfilment of his vow, he was forced to offer her in sacrifice to the Lord, the price of his great victory.

Q. Who was the next remarkable person that ruled Israel as judge?

A. Samson, of the tribe of Dan, who was consecrated to God from his birth, and was a man of great strength. Samson judged Israel twenty years.

Q. What were the most famous exploits of Samson?

A. On one occasion he encountered a furious lion, and, though wholly unarmed, tore him to pieces. At

another time, when surrounded by an army of Philistines, he seized the jaw-bone of an ass, and slew a thousand of the enemy, putting the remainder to flight. On another occasion, when the Philistines had offered some new insult to the people of God, Samson caught three hundred foxes, and tying lighted torches to their tails, sent them in amongst the corn and vineyards of the Philistines.

Q. How did Samson die ?

A. Being wickedly betrayed into the hands of the Philistines, and having lost his strength by the cutting of his hair while he slept, he was imprisoned, and had his eyes pulled out. As his hair grew, however, his strength returned, and being brought forth by the Philistines for the amusement of the company assembled in a vast hall, he laid hold of two of the great pillars which supported the roof, and praying to God, "Let me die with the Philistines," he shook the pillars, the roof fell, and Samson, with three thousand of the enemy, was buried under the walls.

Q. Who ruled Israel after the death of Samson ?

A. The high priest Heli.

Q. What have you to relate of Heli ?

A. Heli was remarkable for his piety and virtue; but he had two sons, Ophni and Phinees, who became, by the too great indulgence of their father, very depraved, and gave grievous scandal to the people of Israel.

Q. Was God displeased with Heli for his criminal indulgence ?

A. He was ; and in punishment thereof, he per .

mitted the Jewish army to be utterly defeated ; the sons of Heli, who carried the Ark, to be slain, with thirty thousand Israelites, and the Ark itself to fall into the hands of the Philistines. On hearing these dismal tidings, the aged Heli fell backwards, and broke his neck, being then ninety-eight years old.

Q. What became of the Ark ?

A. It was placed by the Philistines in the temple of Dagon, but next day they found their idol broken on the ground. The Philistines were, at the same time, so grievously afflicted by the hand of God, that they were glad to get rid of the Ark, and sent it back to the Israelites. It was placed in the house of a Levite named Aminadab, upon whose family it drew down all manner of blessings.

Q. Who was the last judge of Israel ?

A. The prophet Samuel, who had, like Samson, been consecrated to God from his youth. He governed Israel with great wisdom, acting ever in accordance with the Spirit of God.

Q. Who ruled in Israel after Samuel ?

A. Saul, the first king of Israel.

Q. Why did the people desire to have kings instead of judges ?

A. When Samuel had become very old the government devolved on his two sons, who administered justice unfairly, and took bribes for their decisions, whereupon the people began to demand a king to rule over them as other nations had.

Q. Was God pleased with their demand?

A. No; he commanded Samuel to represent to them how much greater and more despotic would be the power of a king, and how heavily he might oppress them; but finding that they still persisted, he instructed Samuel to anoint Saul, son of Cis, of the tribe of Benjamin, as their first king. Samuel then assembled the people to draw lots for the sovereignty, when the choice fell on Saul.

Q. Was Saul's reign prosperous?

A. The first three years were very prosperous. He defeated the Ammonites and the Philistines, also the Amalekites, but having, contrary to the express command of God, spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, with the finest of the flocks of that people, Samuel announced to him that he was rejected by God, and that his family should not continue to reign in Israel.

Q. What remarkable words did Samuel make use of on that occasion?

A. Saul having said, in order to excuse himself, that he had only kept the flocks of the Amalekites for the purpose of offering them in sacrifice, Samuel declared to him that obedience was better than sacrifice, and repeated the decree of God against him and his family.

Q. What command did God give to Samuel whilst he mourned for the sin of Saul?

A. He commanded him to go to Bethlehem, and anoint as king, a youth named David, the youngest of

seven brothers, of the tribe of Juda, who was found by the prophet tending his father's sheep. Him did Samuel anoint as king, and the Spirit of God, forsaking Saul, came upon David.

Q. What affliction then befel Saul?

A. He was seized with an evil Spirit, which only the sound of music could soothe, and David being recommended as an excellent player on the harp, was sent for, and so charmed the king by the harmony of music that he made him his armor-bearer.

Q. What great exploit was achieved by David soon after this appointment?

A. When the army of the Philistines and that of the Israelites, lay encamped opposite each other, preparing for a decisive battle, a Philistine named Goliah, a man of gigantic size, advanced between the two armies and scornfully challenged any man amongst the Israelites to meet him in single combat, and thus decide the contest. This challenge he repeated for forty days, and, no one having courage to accept it, Saul proposed to give his daughter in marriage to him who would encounter the giant Goliah. Thereupon David accepted the challenge, fought with Goliah, and killed him, though armed only with a sling.

Q. What did David say when Goliah, seeing him advance, ridiculed his youth, and the simple weapon that was his only defence?

A. David said, "You come to me, trusting in your armor, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts."

Q. How did David slay Goliath?

A. Putting a stone in his sling, he struck the giant on the forehead, when he fell to the ground, and David cut off his head, seeing which the whole army of the Philistines fled in dismay.

Q. How did Saul requite this great service?

A. He requited it by the blackest ingratitude, and was so filled with envy by the fame David had acquired that he sought occasion to put him to death.

Q. Were Saul's family all actuated by the same feeling towards David?

A. No, Jonathan, the son of Saul, loved David as a brother, and they swore perpetual friendship to each other.

Q. Did Saul give David his daughter in marriage, according to promise?

A. He did, but not his eldest daughter, whom he married to another, and it was only after several extraordinary feats of valor that David succeeded in obtaining the hand of Michol, the younger daughter of Saul.

Q. Did Saul then become reconciled to David?

A. No, he still secretly plotted against his life, so that David had many narrow escapes from the emissaries of his vindictive father-in-law.

Q. Did David cherish the same hatred towards Saul?

A. No, David, being a man after God's own heart, pitied Saul, instead of hating him, and took every opportunity that offered of returning him good for evil.

Q. Mention one instance of David's magnanimous forgiveness?

A. At one time Saul happened to enter alone a cave where David lay concealed with his followers, who urged him to kill his enemy and thus get rid of him at once, but David would not suffer them to lay hands on the Lord's anointed, and merely cut off a small piece of the king's garment, which, calling after him he showed, in order to prove that he bore him no ill will. This was not the only occasion on which David saved the life of Saul, whom he knew to be his deadly foe.

Q. Did this generous conduct on the part of David soften Saul towards him?

A. No, he still pursued him with unrelenting animosity, so that David was at length obliged to take refuge with Achis, king of the Philistines.

Q. How did Saul die?

A. He died fighting against the Philistines, he and his two sons, at the famous battle of Gilboe.

Q. How was David affected by the news of Saul's death?

A. He was much grieved, and ordered the man who brought the news, to be put to death, because he said he had killed Saul, hoping to please David.

Q. Was David acknowledged as king by all the Israelites?

A. No, for the space of over seven years, he was engaged in a contest with Isboseth, a son of Saul, who was made king, by Abner, general of Saul's army.

Isboseth and Abner being both slain, however, David was acknowledged as king by all the people.

Q. Who was general of David's army?

A. Joab, a brave and loyal man, but harsh and imperious even to his king.

Q. What place did David choose for his royal residence?

A. The castle of Sion, in Jerusalem, which he had before taken from the Jebusites; around this stronghold he built a city which he called the city of David.

Q. Did David overcome the Philistines?

A. Yes, by the assistance of God he gained a decisive victory over them, so that they were never able to trouble him more.

Q. What was David's first care on finding himself in peaceable possession of his kingdom?

A. His first care was to promote the glory of God, and establish divine worship with becoming splendor. He, therefore, intended to convey the Ark from its temporary resting-place to the royal city.

Q. Did he accomplish this design?

A. No; he was deterred from doing so by the fate of a Levite named Oza, who, during the removal of the Ark to Jerusalem, seeing it leaning to one side, feared that it might fall from the chariot whereon it was placed, and, in violation of the law, put forth his hand to sustain it, whereupon he was struck dead in front of the Ark. David, seeing this, feared to receive the Ark into his palace, but placed it at the house of Obededom.

Q. How long did the Ark remain in the house of Obededom?

A. It remained there three months, when David, hearing of the wonderful blessings it had drawn down on Obededom and all his house, was encouraged to bring it to Jerusalem, according to his former intention.

Q. What design did David form in order to honor God more effectually and more lastingly?

A. He formed the design of building a temple to God, as it grieved him to think that the Ark of the Covenant rested in a Tabernacle covered with skins, whilst he himself dwelt in a palace of cedar.

Q. Who was his counsellor in this matter?

A. The prophet Nathan. It so happened, however, that the Lord spoke to Nathan by night, and admonished him to tell David that the building of the Temple was reserved for his son Solomon, whose reign was to be one of unbroken peace.

Q. What war did David afterwards wage?

A. A war against the Ammonites, during which war he made himself guilty of the double crime of adultery and murder.

Q. Whom did the Lord send to rebuke David for these crimes?

A. He sent the prophet Nathan, who having brought him to sincere repentance, announced to him on the part of God that his sins were pardoned, but that, nevertheless, he should be punished for them by severe temporal afflictions.

Q. How was this prediction fulfilled?

A. By the continual warfare in which David spent the remaining twenty years of his life; by the rebellion and violent death of his favorite son Absalom, which was followed by another rebellion of a Benjamite named Siba, who withdrew all the tribes except that of Juda from their allegiance to David.

Q. When peace was again restored in the land, what folly on the part of David incurred the divine displeasure?

A. David, through a motive of vanity, issued orders for a general census, being desirous to know the number of his people.

Q. How was David punished?

A. By a plague which the Lord sent amongst the people of Israel, which in three days killed seventy thousand of them.

Q. What did David when he saw the people thus punished for his sins?

A. Clothed in sackcloth and ashes, he prostrated himself before God, beseeching him to pour down his wrath on him who was alone guilty, but to spare his people who were innocent.

Q. Did the Lord hear David's prayer?

A. Yes; the Lord ever merciful to the repenting sinner, commanded the destroying angel to stop.

Q. Where did the angel stop?

A. Over the threshing-floor of Arenna, the Jebusite, on the top of Mount Moria, in Jerusalem, where David, by God's command, erected an altar of sacrifice; on

this spot was afterwards built the great Temple of Jerusalem.

Q. By whom was David succeeded on the throne of Israel?

A. David was succeeded by his son Solomon, whom he caused to be anointed and proclaimed king. He then commended his son to the faithful and loyal service of all his friends and courtiers, and obtained their promise to assist him in the great work of building the Temple, for which he had himself collected vast materials.

Q. Did Solomon encounter any opposition?

A. Yes; one of his brothers, named Adonias, would have himself made king, being supported in his unjust pretensions by the valiant Joab; but, after a second attempt on their part, Solomon, having forgiven the first, he ordered both to be put to death, after which he reigned in peace.

Q. Whom did Solomon marry?

A. He married a daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, very soon after his father's death.

Q. For what was Solomon chiefly remarkable?

A. For his great and supereminent wisdom, which was a special gift from God, at his own earnest request. So great was the renown of his wisdom throughout all the East, that the queen of Saba came from the farthest part of Ethiopia to see for herself if his wisdom were such as it was represented.

FIFTH AGE OF THE WORLD.

EMBRACING ABOUT 470 YEARS.

Q. What was the great work of Solomon's reign?

A. The building of the Temple projected by his father David, and which Solomon commenced in the fourth year of his reign, four hundred and eighty years after the entrance of the Israelites into the land of promise.

Q. How was the Temple constructed?

A. It was constructed on the plan of the Tabernacle made by Moses in the desert, and none but the most costly materials were employed in its erection. The Temple, like the Tabernacle, was divided into two parts. The Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies, wherein was placed the Ark of the Covenant. In the middle of the inner part called the Holy of Holies, stood an altar of gold, called the altar of perfumes.

Q. Describe the Holy of Holies?

A. It was lined throughout with the finest gold, and over that part in which the Ark was placed, were two cherubim covered with gold, with extended wings, and of such a size that the outer wing of each reached to the wall, whilst the other two joined in the centre over the Ark.

Q. How long was Solomon building the Temple?

A. Seven years; during which time two hundred

thousand men were constantly employed, and vast sums were expended on the work.

Q. Who was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies?

A. The high priest only, and he but once a year, and after many legal rites.

Q. Of what was this entrance of the high priest into the Holy of Holies a figure?

A. It was a figure of the great atonement of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the oblation of whose precious blood was prefigured by the offerings of the blood of victims.

Q. What did Solomon when the Temple was finished in all its parts?

A. He assembled the princes of Israel, the ancients, and the heads of families to assist at the dedication, and the solemn translation of the Ark to the place destined for its reception in the Holy of Holies.

Q. In what way did the Lord manifest his acceptance of the homage paid him on that solemn occasion?

A. When the priests came out from the Sanctuary, after placing the Ark in the Holy of Holies, and all had united in singing a canticle of praise, the glory of the Lord filled the whole temple as a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister.

Q. What were the characteristics of Solomon's reign?

A. The characteristics of Solomon's reign were universal peace, and great abundance, not only of the necessaries of life, but of all manner of luxuries, gold

and silver being so common that they were of little value amongst the people.

Q. Did Solomon always continue faithful to God?

A. No, in his advanced life he married idolatrous wives, and to please them built temples and altars to their gods, to which he himself even offered incense, forgetful of the great God of heaven and earth who had so wonderfully manifested his power on behalf of his people and his house.

Q. How did God punish this great sin of Solomon's?

A. By permitting his kingdom to be divided, the greater part given to Jeroboam, a servant of Solomon, and only a small portion to remain subject to his descendants. The execution of this sentence God delayed till after Solomon's death, on account of his father David.

Q. How long did Solomon reign?

A. Solomon reigned thirty-seven years from the death of his father David.

Q. By whom was Solomon succeeded?

A. By his son Roboam, a harsh and tyrannical man, who so oppressed the people of Israel that, in accordance with the prediction made to Solomon, ten of the tribes revolted, and made Jeroboam king over them. The tribes of Juda and Benjamin, alone remained subject to him.

Q. Did Roboam make any efforts to recover what he had lost?

A. Yes, he assembled an army of chosen men, and

was proceeding to make war on the revolted tribes, but was admonished by Semeias, a holy man sent by God, that what had happened was by the divine appointment, in punishment of Solomon's apostacy. Roboam then submitted to the divine decree, and his kingdom was from that time called the kingdom of Juda, whereas that of Jeroboam was styled the kingdom of Israel.

Q. How did the tribe of Levi act on the secession of the ten tribes?

A. Finding that Jeroboam would not permit them to exercise their functions, the Levites gave up their possessions amongst the ten revolted tribes, and went to dwell in Juda and Jerusalem.

Q. Did Roboam continue all his life faithful to God?

A. No, after three years of fidelity to God, during which he and his people prospered exceedingly, Roboam fell into idolatry, as his father had done before.

Q. How was he punished?

A. By the invasion of his kingdom by Sesac, king of Egypt, who took several cities of Juda, and even entered Jerusalem, which he sacked and plundered, but Almighty God, being softened by the repentance and humiliation of Roboam and the princes, did not permit Sesac to destroy the Holy City.

Q. How long did Roboam reign?

A. Roboam reigned seventeen years, and died at the age of fifty-eight.

Q. Who succeeded Roboam on the throne of Israel?

A. Roboam was succeeded by his son Abias, who reigned only three years.

Q. What have you to remark of Abias?

A. In the beginning of his reign being attacked by Jeroboam with an army twice the number of his, Abias gained a great victory by invoking the assistance of God, but having fallen into sin, he was cut off by divine justice, although, for David's sake, his son Asa was permitted to succeed him.

Q. What was the character of Asa?

A. Asa was a good and pious king. In his time, idolatry was banished from the land of Juda, and the divine worship re-established in all its splendor. For this Asa was rewarded by a long and prosperous reign, and by a signal victory over Zara, king of the Ethiopians. Asa was, nevertheless, guilty of some faults, especially towards the close of his life, which incurred the divine displeasure, and the prophet Hanani was sent to rebuke him.

Q. Who succeeded Asa?

A. His son Josaphat, a wise and virtuous prince, who had the happiness of persevering to the end of his life in the faithful service of God. The consequence was that he was respected at home and abroad, that none of the neighboring princes dared attack him, and that God otherwise rewarded the fidelity of this holy king by unbroken peace and prosperity amongst his people.

Q. Did Jeroboam continue to worship the true God after obtaining the sovereignty of the ten tribes?

A. No, he soon forgot the Lord who had exalted him, banished the Levites by his oppression of them, and set up idols, for which he made priests, and at whose altars he sometimes officiated himself; by his example he drew the greater part of his people into idolatry which drew down upon them the divine vengeance, and so caused their ruin.

Q. By what act did Jeroboam still further excite the wrath of God against him?

A. Fearing that his people might return to their allegiance to the royal house of David, if suffered to go to Jerusalem for sacrifice, Jeroboam set up two golden calves, one in Dan, the other in Bethel, to which he offered sacrifice with the same solemnities as those used in the Temple of Jerusalem, and told the people to go no more to Jerusalem, for that these were the gods who had brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Q. How was Jeroboam's wickedness punished?

A. A prophet of God predicted that his race should be exterminated, which occurred about a year after his death when his son and successor Nadab was put to death with his whole family.

Q. Who succeeded the good king Josaphat on the throne of Juda?

A. His eldest son Joram, a wicked and impious prince, who married Athalia, daughter of Achab, the contemporary king of Israel, and with her became an

idolater. He slew all his brethren, and established idolatry in his kingdom.

Q. Whom did the Lord send to rebuke Joram for his grievous iniquity, and foretell his approaching doom?

A. The prophet Elias, who foretold that he was soon to die of a painful and lingering disease, which came to pass in the eighth year of his reign.

Q. Where was Joram buried?

A. He was buried in the city of David, but without honors, and not in the royal sepulchre of the house of David.

Q. Who was Joram's successor on the throne of Juda?

A. His only surviving son Ochozias, as wicked and impious as his father; he reigned but one year, being cut off with all his attendants, by Jehu, when on his way to visit his idolatrous kinsman, the king of Israel.

Q. What did Athalia, the mother of Ochozias, after the death of her son?

A. She ordered all his children to be slain, and took possession of the throne of Juda.

Q. Was this wicked queen suffered to reign in peace?

A. No; the Almighty, having a care over the house of David, and in order to perpetuate the race from which the Messiah was to come, saved one of the children of Ochozias, named Joas, from the general massacre. This prince, by the aid of the high priest and other powerful friends, succeeded in recovering the throne of Juda, and the unnatural mother of his father paid with her life the forfeit of her atrocious crimes.

Q. Did Joas remain faithful to the Lord ?

A. He did remain faithful so long as Joiada the high priest lived, but after Joiada's death, Joas chose evil counsellors, and unhappily fell into idolatry.

Q. What ungrateful and wicked act was done by Joas soon after the death of the high priest ?

A. Zacharias, the son of Joiada, having admonished Joas of his sin in forsaking the service of God for that of idols, the wicked king caused him to be stoned to death in the court of the Temple.

Q. What was the end of Joas ?

A. He was murdered by two of his own servants, after a long but troubled reign, during the latter part of which God permitted him to be harassed by the Assyrians, because he had forsaken his service. Joas, like his grandfather Joram, was not buried in the royal sepulchre of Juda.

Q. What kings reigned in Israel during the time that Josaphat, Joram, Ochozias, and Joas reigned in Juda ?

A. Achab, Ochozias, Joram, Jehu, and Joachas.

Q. Who was the wife of Achab ?

A. A very wicked woman named Jezabel, and Achab was no better than his wife, for what none of his predecessors had dared to do, he began to worship Baal.

Q. What was the end of Achab and Jezabel ?

A. Achab was killed in battle, and Jezabel, thirteen years after, was thrown from a window by the orders of Jehu, and devoured by dogs in the place where she fell, all of which had been predicted for them by the

prophet Elias, when sent by God to rebuke them for their crimes.

Q. What did the prophet Elias, when he saw that idolatry was prevailing in the land of Israel, where he dwelt?

A. By his prayers, he prevented rain from falling for three whole years, so that a famine came upon the land, and there was much suffering amongst the people.

Q. How was Elias fed during this famine?

A. He was at first miraculously fed by ravens, that carried him food morning and evening, and afterwards by a poor widow, inspired by God to do so.

Q. Whither did Elias flee to avoid the vengeance of Jezabel, when, by his command, the people had put her false prophets to death?

A. He fled to Mount Horeb, by the direction of an angel, who gave him miraculous food which enabled him to walk for forty days and forty nights across the desert.

Q. Of what was this miraculous food a type?

A. It was a type of the blessed Eucharist, which alone gives strength and courage to our souls during the trials and vicissitudes of our earthly pilgrimage.

Q. Did Elias die?

A. No; he was taken up alive into heaven in a fiery chariot, and is to come down before the end of the world to bear testimony of God and his Christ, and assist the faithful in their struggle against the power of Antichrist.

Q. On whom did the spirit of Elias descend ?

A. On his disciple Eliseus, on whom he let his cloak fall as he ascended into heaven. Like his master Elias, Eliseus worked many splendid miracles, one of which was raising a dead child to life, the son of a poor widow.

Q. What have you to relate concerning the bones of the prophet Eliseus ?

A. A dead man was raised to life by being accidentally placed in contact with the bones of the holy prophet in his sepulchre.

Q. Who succeeded Joas in the kingdom of Juda ?

A. His son Amasias, who, like his father, served God during the earlier part of his reign, but fell into the same sinful ways in his later years.

Q. What befel Amasias ?

A. He had been prosperous so long as he served God, but having forsaken him for the idols of the nations whom he conquered by his divine aid, he was deserted by God, and signally defeated by Joas, king of Israel, who demolished part of the walls of Jerusalem, and carried off the treasures of the Temple.

Q. What great prophet lived during the reign of Amasias, under Jeroboam II., king of Israel ?

A. The prophet Jonas.

Q. What is related of Jonas ?

A. He had been commanded by God to go preach to the idolatrous people of Nineveh, and threaten their city with destruction, unless they repented and did

penance for their crimes. Jonas, being afraid to undertake this dangerous mission, thought to avoid it by sailing to Tharsis; but the ship in which he embarked had scarcely set sail, when a great storm arose, and the crew, having cast lots to see who on board had excited the wrath of God, the lot fell on Jonas, who was immediately thrown into the sea.

Q. What then befel Jonas?

A. He was swallowed by an enormous whale, in whose belly he remained three days and three nights, during which time he ceased not to bewail his disobedience, and invoke the mercy of God, who graciously hearing his prayer, caused the whale to cast him on shore.

Q. Did Jonas then obey the Lord's command?

A. Yes, he obeyed, and going to Niniveh, preached so efficaciously to the people of that great city, that from the king to the meanest of his subjects, they all did penance in sack-cloth and ashes, whereupon God, who only desired their conversion, forgave them their manifold offences, and spared their city.

Q. What was prefigured by the imprisonment of Jonas in the whale's belly, and his miraculous coming forth after three days?

A. The burial of our divine Lord in the Sepulchre, and his glorious resurrection on the third day.

Q. What remarkable occurrences took place during the twelve years of an interregnum that followed the death of Amazias?

A. Nabuchodonosor, first king of Niniveh, having founded the empire of Assyria, by the conquest of

many nations, elated with success, undertook to bring the people of God also into subjection. For this purpose he sent Holofernes, the general of his armies, with a hundred thousand men, to besiege Bethulia, a city of Juda.

Q. By whom was Holofernes slain ?

A. By Judith a young and wealthy widow of Bethulia, a woman of extraordinary piety and virtue. Seeing that her people were about to yield to the mighty power of the Assyrians, Judith conceived the design of slaying Holofernes, the Assyrian general, which she accomplished by means of an ingenious stratagem, and cutting off the head of the tyrant, brought it under her cloak to Bethulia.

Q. What was the result of Judith's perilous exploit ?

A. Encouraged by the sight of the head, and the exhortations of Judith and the chief men of their city, the Bethulians determined to resist, and, aided by God, they fought the Assyrians and totally defeated them, leaving their camp, with all its luxurious wealth, to the victorious people of Juda.

Q. What king reigned next in Juda ?

A. Azarias, sometimes called Osias, the son of Amazias; he was only sixteen years of age when he ascended the throne, but he reigned fifty-two years, during which time he fortified Jerusalem, built several cities, and prospered in all his undertakings.

Q. Did this prosperity continue ?

A. No, Osias, elated with his great prosperity, in-

sisted on offering incense himself, in the temple, contrary to the earnest advice of the high priest; thereupon he was immediately stricken with a leprosy from which he never recovered.

Q. What kings reigned in Israel whilst Amazias and Osias occupied the throne of Juda?

A. Joas, Jeroboam II, Zacharias, Sellum, Manahem, and Phaceia. With Sellum ended the race of Jehu, to whom God had announced by one of his prophets that his family should rule in Israel to the fourth generation.

Q. Who succeeded Osias (or Azarias) king of Juda?

A. His son Joathan, a good and pious king. During a prosperous reign of sixteen years he built a number of cities, ornamented the temple, and brought the warlike Ammonites into subjection.

Q. By whom was Joathan succeeded?

A. By his son Achaz, who, unlike his father was a wicked and idolatrous king. He removed the sacred vessels from the Temple, which he closed, and built altars to idols in various parts of the city of Jerusalem. In punishment of his crimes he was grievously harassed by the surrounding nations, and died impenitent after a reign of sixteen years.

Q. Who was the next king of Juda?

A. Ezechias son of Achaz, a prince of extraordinary virtue and piety, and wholly devoted to the service of God. He re-opened the temple which his impious

father had closed, caused it to be purified, and invited all the children of Israel to celebrate the Pasch.

Q. Did the people of Israel unite with their brethren of Juda in that solemn act of worship?

A. Many of them did, although the majority of them mocked the holy king, and despised his invitation; but all Juda joined with one heart in the celebration, and the Pasch was solemnised with more splendor than it had been from the days of Solomon.

Q. What else did Ezechias do to promote true religion and re-establish divine worship?

A. He assembled the priests and Levites, who had been totally dispersed, and restored the ancient observances of religion according to the divine ordinance.

Q. Was the reign of Ezechias a prosperous one?

A. It was exceedingly prosperous. The people of Juda encouraged by their king's example, and guided by his wise precepts, obtained peace and tranquillity at home, whilst abroad their arms prevailed, the cities they had lost were all recovered, and their country shook off the heavy yoke of the Assyrians, under which it had groaned from the time of Achaz.

Q. What kings reigned in Israel during the reign of Joathan and the first years of that of Ezechias in Juda?

A. Phacee and Osee; the former of these reigned twenty years.

Q. What remarkable event occurred during the reign of Phacee?

A. Theglathphalasar, king of Assyria, invaded Israel and carried away a great number of captives.

Q. Who was the next and last king of Israel?

A. Osee, who had murdered Phacee nine years before. For the last six years of his unhappy reign, Osee was the contemporary of the good king Ezechias.

Q. Can you tell how the kingdom of Israel came to an end?

A. Osee, having attempted to throw off the yoke of the Assyrians to whom he had been obliged to pay tribute, was deprived of his kingdom by Salmanasar, who invaded the country, took Samaria, its chief city, after a siege of three years, and utterly abolishing the kingdom of Israel, led its people into captivity in Nineveh and in Media.

Q. How did Salmanasar re-people the land of Israel?

A. By sending idolaters from Babylon and other parts of his vast dominions; by the advice of his counsellors, he sent priests to instruct these people in the law of God, but they uniting the worship of the true God with that of their idols, their descendants worshipped both, and the Jews were forbidden to hold communication with them.

Q. How long had the kingdom of Israel existed?

A. Two hundred and sixty years, counting from the secession of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, till the final destruction of the monarchy and the Assyrian captivity, in the ninth year of the reign of Osee.

Q. What had been the prevailing sin of the kings and people of Israel?

A. Their prevailing sin was the heinous one of idolatry, which, from the first foundation of the monarchy,

by Jeroboam, had been openly professed, and all but universally practised.

Q. Were there no true believers amongst the people of Israel after their separation from Juda?

A. Yes; but they were at all times comparatively few; for, more than a century before the fall of Israel, there were only seven thousand worshippers of the true God to be found in all the land.

Q. Did Almighty God utterly abandon these revolted tribes of the Israelites to their own evil ways?

A. No; being desirous to save them if possible, on account of their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he raised up amongst them at divers times holy men, prophets, whom he sent to rebuke them for their iniquities, and warn them of the terrible punishment which their continued infidelity would draw down upon them; but they would not hear the prophets.

Q. What prophets lived in Juda and Israel from the reign of Amazias in Juda, and Jeroboam II. in Israel, to the Babylonian captivity?

A. Jonas, Amos, Osee, Isaias, Micheas, Joel, and Abdias. Osee and Isaias prophesied for nearly an hundred years: Osee in Israel, Isaias in Juda. All the others lived and prophesied, some in Israel and some in Juda.

Q. Of what did Isaias prophesy?

A. Amongst other things, he foretold the Assyrian captivity, and of all the prophets, he most clearly predicted the coming of our Divine Redeemer, his life, and also his passion, even its most minute details.

Q. What holy man lived in Israel at the time of the captivity?

A. Tobias, whose family history is preserved in one of the books of the Old Testament, which bears his name.

Q. Who was Tobias?

A. Tobias was a just and holy man of the tribe of Nephtali, who had never defiled himself with idolatry or superstition, was faithful to God from his youth upwards, and went every year to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice. His wife and their only son, called, like his father, Tobias, were as faithful as himself in the service of God, and their piety drew down miraculous favors from heaven upon their house.

Q. How did God interpose his almighty power between the good king Ezechas of Juda, and the Assyrian army under Sennacherib?

A. Moved by the prayer of the holy king, the Lord sent an angel into the camp of the Assyrians, and slew in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand of their bravest soldiers, including all their chief officers.

Q. Did this save Jerusalem?

A. Yes; Sennacherib was obliged to fly in haste with the remnant of his army, and was soon after slain by his own sons in the temple of his idol at Niniveh.

Q. What great prophet was counsellor to Ezechias?

A. Isaias, who began to prophesy in the reign of Azarias, and continued during the reigns of Joathan, Achaz, and Ezechias. Ezechias having fallen dangerously ill, prayed earnestly to God that his life might

be spared, when the Lord commanded Isaias to tell him that he had heard his prayer, and that his life should be prolonged for fifteen years.

Q. What sign did God give in proof of the fulfillment of this promise?

A. At the prayer of Isaias, the Lord made the shadow go back ten degrees on the sun-dial.

Q. What imprudent act did Ezechias commit soon after?

A. Ambassadors being sent to him from the king of Babylon, to congratulate him on his recovery, Ezechias took occasion, through pride, to display his treasures before them.

Q. What was the result?

A. Isaias was sent by God to announce to Ezechias that those very treasures should be seized and carried to Babylon; but at the earnest supplication of the king the sentence was not executed in his day.

Q. By whom was Ezechias succeeded?

A. By his son Manasses, an impious and cruel prince, who built up again the idolatrous temples which his father had destroyed; and carried his audacious impiety so far as to erect idols in and around the Temple; he also put to death a great number of just persons.

Q. What eminent personage is said to have been amongst these victims of the cruelty of Manasses?

A. The great prophet Isaias, who, according to Jewish tradition was sawed in two by order of this wicked prince, for having reproached him with his enormous crimes.

Q. Did Manasses continue his wicked courses to the end of his life ?

A. No, being taken at length and carried captive to Babylon, where he was made to undergo much suffering and humiliation, Manasses began, in his distress, to invoke the assistance of God, and becoming sincerely contrite for his sins, the merciful God heard his prayers and restored him to his kingdom, when he cast out all the idols, and re-established the worship of God.

Q. Who succeeded Manasses ?

A. His son Amon, who imitated his father in his wickedness, but not in his repentance or expiation.

Q. Who followed Amon on the throne of Juda ?

A. Josias, a good and pious prince, who not only restored the worship of God in his own dominions, but succeeded even in destroying idolatry in the neighboring kingdom of Israel, whither he went in person, and demolished the altar erected by Jeroboam to the golden calf.

Q. Who were the remaining kings of Juda, and what was their character ?

A. The four last kings of Juda were Joachas, Joakin, Jechonias, and Sedecias. They were all profane and wicked men, abandoned to their own evil ways, and despising the warnings and admonitions sent them by God through the prophet Jeremias, who lived in those latter days of the kingdom of Juda. The consequence was that they each and all died miserably, and at length the Assyrian king put an end to their

kingdom and carried their people into captivity, as already related.

Q. Who was king of Assyria about this time ?

A. Nabuchodonosor, whose remarkable history is recorded in scripture.

Q. Can you relate some portion of Nabuchodonosor's history ?

A. Having conquered the Medes, a powerful people, Nabuchodonosor formed the ambitious and silly project of making all nations subject to himself, and even to make them adore him as a god, instructing his general, Holofernes, not only to subdue all tribes and nations, but to destroy their temples and their idols, so that he might be worshipped as the god of all.

Q. Did all nations submit to this tyrannical and impious project ?

A. The Jews alone resisted ; notwithstanding the vast inferiority of their means and forces, they determined to defend the temple of the Lord at all hazards, and in order to prevent the Assyrian army from reaching Jerusalem, they occupied all the mountain passes, fortified their towns, and took the still more efficacious means of propitiating God by fasting and prayer.

Q. Did Holofernes succeed in reaching the holy city ?

A. No, he had only commenced the conquest of Juda, when at Bethulia his career was brought to a sudden close by the wisdom and courage of Judith, as before related, and that heroic woman called to the watchmen on the gate-towers of Bethulia, when she

returned with the head of Holofernes, "God is with us, who has shown his power in Israel."

Q. What titles did the high priest confer on Judith when by her means, not only Bethulia, but all Juda was delivered?

A. Coming from Jerusalem, with all the ancients, to see and congratulate Judith on her glorious victory, the venerable pontiff honored and addressed her as "The glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, and the honor of the people."

Q. What great miracle was wrought in Babylon about this time?

A. Nabuchodonosor having caused a golden statue of himself to be made and erected on a plain near the city, ordered that all the people should assemble, and at a given signal fall down and adore him, under pain of being cast into a fiery furnace. Three young Hebrews having refused to worship the statue were cast into the fiery furnace, and, although the men who threw them in were consumed by the fire, these three generous confessors of the true faith walked unhurt in the midst of the fire, Almighty God having sent an angel to make the place cool and pleasant for them.

Q. What strange and awful punishment was inflicted on Nabuchodonosor for his impious assumption of divine honors?

A. He was compelled to walk on his hands and feet, and to hold companionship with beasts, for seven years, as had been foretold by the prophet Daniel.

Q. Was he ever restored to the dignity and the society of man?

A. Yes, at the end of seven years, he was restored

to reason, and humbling himself before the mighty God of the Hebrews, acknowledged the justice of the terrible punishment he had received, whereupon the Lord, ever willing to hear the prayer of the penitent sinner, restored him to his kingdom with more glory and majesty than ever.

Q. What have you to relate of Balthazar, the successor of Nabuchodonosor?

A. He had given a great banquet to a thousand of his courtiers, generals and nobles, and had caused the sacred vessels that were taken by his father from the temple of Jerusalem to be brought forth for the use of himself and his guests.

Q. What was the consequence of this sacrilegious act?

A. Scarcely had Balthazar and his guests begun to drink from the sacred vessels, when the fingers of a hand were seen writing on the wall; all were terrified, but none could decipher the mysterious characters, till at length the prophet Daniel was brought, and he explained the dread enigma.

Q. What was Daniel's explanation?

A. He told the king that the words written on the wall by the hand of God himself, were *Mane, Thecel, Phares*—that *Mane* meant "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and it is at an end;" *Thecel* meant, "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting;" and *Phares* signified "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

Q. When was this prediction fulfilled?

A. That very night. Cyrus, afterwards called the

Great, took the city of Babylon, and, putting the king to death, possessed himself of all his treasures, and also of his kingdom, which thenceforward formed part of the great Persian empire.

Q. What occurred to the prophet Daniel in the reign of Darius, first king of Persia and uncle to Cyrus?

A. By the intrigues of the courtiers who hated him because of the favor he enjoyed with the king, Daniel was thrown into a den of lions, but the lions licked his feet, and did not harm him in the least; and whilst he was there, an angel carried Habacuc, another prophet, a stranger to Daniel, with some food he had prepared for himself, to the den where Daniel sat amongst the lions, and so gave him to eat.

Q. How long did the Babylonian captivity of the Jews last?

A. It lasted seventy years, according to the prediction of the prophet Jeremiah.

SIXTH AGE OF THE WORLD.

FROM THE END OF THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST, EMBRACING A PERIOD OF 546 YEARS.

Q. By whose decree was the Temple of Jerusalem rebuilt?

A. It was rebuilt by the decree of Cyrus, in the first year of his reign. The seventy years captivity foretold by Isaias being ended, Cyrus gave permission for the Temple to be rebuilt, and he restored the sacred ves-

sels which had been taken from it by Nabuchodonosor.

Q. Did the Jews avail themselves of this permission?

A. Yes; the principal families of Juda and Benjamin, with the priests and Levites to the number of forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, with seven thousand three hundred and sixty servants marched to Jerusalem under the leadership of Zorobabel, grandson of king Joachim, accompanied by their high priest Josue, and the prophets Aggeus and Zacharias.

Q. Who opposed the rebuilding of the Temple?

A. The Samaritans. At first they were willing to assist in its reconstruction, but their services not being accepted, they did every thing they could to impede the progress of the work, and by their influence with the kings of Persia, kept back the rebuilding of the Temple for a period of sixteen years. But at length the prophets Aggeus and Zacharias induced Zorobabel and the people to proceed with the work, and the king of Persia himself contributed large sums to aid the Jews in rebuilding their Temple.

Q. What befel meanwhile the Jews who remained in captivity?

A. They were grievously persecuted by a wicked and powerful man named Aman, by whose malice they were in great danger of being entirely cut off.

Q. Whom did God raise up to protect his oppressed people?

A. Esther, a beautiful and virtuous woman of their own race, whom Assurus the king had made his wife.

By the powerful influence of this fair and holy queen, peace was restored to the Jews in Babylon, and many who had feared to acknowledge themselves Jews, now openly professed their faith, and worshipped the true God.

Q. Who conducted a number of the Jews to Jerusalem about eight years after Zorababel's return thither?

A. Esdras, the priest, being sent by Artaxerxes the king to carry presents to the Temple, was empowered to appoint judges and magistrates, and to establish law and order in Judea. Esdras governed that country in the name of the Persian king for thirteen years, when Nehemias was sent with a new commission from the king.

Q. Who was Nehemias, and what was his character?

A. Nehemias had been cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, and having earnestly petitioned the king to have the walls of Jerusalem rebuilt, he was appointed governor, and sent to have that work accomplished. He was an upright and God-fearing man, and by his wisdom and good government did much to ameliorate the condition of the Jewish people. Nehemias is honorably mentioned in Scripture as a great benefactor to the poor.

Q. What prophet lived after the rebuilding of the Temple?

A. Malachias, the last of the prophets, lived after the rebuilding of the Temple. There was no prophet from his time till that of John the Baptist, whose coming he foretold.

Q. How many of the prophets are now known by their prophecies?

A. Sixteen in all: they are divided into two classes, known as the great and the minor prophets, from the greater or lesser extent of their prophesies.

Q. Which are called the great prophets?

A. Isaias, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

Q. Name the twelve minor prophets?

A. Jonas, Osee, Amos, Abdias, Micheas, Nahum, Joel, Sophonias, Habacuc, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias.

Q. How did Nehemias obtain consecrated fire after the rebuilding of the Temple?

A. He sent some descendants of the priests, who had concealed the sacred fire by command of the prophet Jeremiah, to seek it, but they finding only thick water, Nehemias directed them to bring him some of it, and having sprinkled therewith the altar and the victim, it ignited, and consumed the sacrifice.

Q. How was the kingdom of Juda governed after the death of Nehemias?

A. By the high priests, of whom a regular succession had been maintained from the days of Aaron.

Q. To whom was Judea then subject?

A. It was subject to Persia, under whose kings the people of God enjoyed comparative peace in the undisturbed exercise of their religion.

Q. Did the people of Israel continue in a communion of worship during that time with their brethren of Judea?

A. No; owing to the intermarriage of a priestly

family with one of Samaria, in Israel, contrary to the Jewish law, a schism arose, and a schismatic temple was erected on Mount Garizim, in Samaria, in opposition to that of Jerusalem.

Q. Who was Seleucus?

A. A king of Asla, who, by the connivance of a wicked man named Simon, overseer of the Temple, sent his commissary Heliodorus, to seize immense sums of money which had been deposited in the Temple.

Q. Did Heliodorus succeed in obtaining this treasure?

A. No; the good high priest, Onias, with all the people, earnestly besought God to save the Temple from profanation, and God, hearing their pious prayers, sent his angels visibly to protect the sanctuary.

Q. Who was Antiochus?

A. A most wicked king of Asia, the successor of Seleucus, who grievously oppressed the Jewish nation. On one occasion, he took and sacked Jerusalem, killing eighty thousand of its people in three days, and making forty thousand prisoners; forty thousand more he sold as slaves.

Q. What sacrilegious act did Antiochus commit on that occasion?

A. Being conducted to the Temple by the impious Menelaus, who had usurped the office of high priest, Antiochus laid sacrilegious hands on the treasures therein contained, and robbed the Temple.

Q. What instructions were given by Antiochus to his governors in Judea?

A. To oppress and afflict the people; and he after-

wards sent his general Appolonius with a large army, to kill all the men of the Jewish nation, and sell the women and children as slaves.

Q. What other proof did Antiochus give of his hatred to the Jewish religion ?

A. He commenced a violent persecution against the professors of that religion, placed an idol in the temple, defiled the altars, and put a great number of persons to death because they would not deny the one true God, and bow the knee to idols.

Q. Mention some of the victims of the persecution of Antiochus ?

A. Eleazer, one of the chief scribes, a holy old man who was ninety years of age, and a whole family, commonly called the Maccabees, consisting of seven brothers and their pious mother, all of whom suffered martyrdom with heroic fortitude.

Q. In what other way did Antiochus show his hatred of the true religion ?

A. He destroyed what he could of the sacred writings, and put to death those with whom any of them were discovered.

Q. Whom did God raise up at that time to assist his people ?

A. A holy priest named Mathathias, who with his family and kindred were all most faithful to God, and determined to die rather than renounce their allegiance to him.

Q. What have you to relate of Mathathias ?

A. Having retired from Jerusalem with his family,

to his native city called Modin, he was called on to set an example to the people by submitting to the idolaters; he not only steadfastly refused, but slew with his own hand an apostate Jew whom he saw sacrificing to idols, killed the officer who was forcing him to that base act, and finally broke down the idolatrous altar.

Q. What else did Mathathias do for the service of God and his country?

A. He placed himself at the head of the most courageous Jews, attacked the enemy, and gained several victories over the idolaters, destroyed their altars, and, when dying, left an injunction on his sons, and especially his son Judas Machabeus, to consecrate their lives to the service of God, and walk always faithfully before him.

Q. How many sons had Mathathias?

A. He had five sons whose names were Judas, Eleazer, John, Jonathan, and Simon, all of whom were equally valiant, equally wise, and equally devoted to the service of God, and his people.

Q. Which of the sons of Mathathias did their father appoint to succeed him in the government of God's people?

A. Judas Machabeus, the youngest, but the bravest of his sons, who had been famed for valor from his youth.

Q. Was Judas victorious over the enemy?

A. Yes; notwithstanding the vast superiority of the enemy's forces, the valiant Judas defeated them in

every engagement, and finally drove the idolaters out of Judea.

Q. What did Antiochus Epiphanes when he heard of the victories of Judas Machabeus?

A. He immediately set out for Jerusalem, with an intention to destroy the whole Jewish people.

Q. Did he accomplish this wicked design?

A. No, when on his way to Jerusalem he fell from his chariot, and was grievously injured by the fall; Almighty God struck him, moreover, with a horrible disease so that worms swarmed from his body, the stench whereof became intolerable to his whole army.

Q. Did he then repent of his manifold sins?

A. He did, to a certain extent, inasmuch as he saw the misery they had brought upon him; he humbled himself before God, and promised to do great things for his temple and his people if he were only cured, but his repentance being only from a personal motive was of no avail before God, and he died in his sins, in that wretched condition.

Q. What was the first care of Judas Machabeus after he had driven the enemy from his country?

A. His first care was to purify the temple, which he then repaired and refurnished, erected a new altar of holocausts, collected the sacred writings scattered abroad during the war, and caused the sacrifices and all other religious observances to be faithfully practised, as of old. He also strongly fortified Mount Zion.

Q. How did Judas Machabeus usually prepare for battle?

A. By fasting, prayer, and humiliation, which drew

down upon him and his arms the blessing of God, and enabled him to defeat, with only a small force, the vast armies brought against him, which he did on many occasions.

Q. What other pious practice of Judas Machabeus is recorded in Scripture?

A. That of sending money to Jerusalem after his battles, to have sacrifice offered up for the souls of his deceased soldiers.

Q. What does the Holy Scripture say with regard to this pious act of Judas Machabeus?

A. That he "thought well and religiously concerning the resurrection," and "that it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins."

Q. How did Judas Machabeus die?

A. He died gloriously, as he had lived, fighting at the head of a small band of devoted followers, a vast army of idolaters, under Bacchides. The battle had continued from morning till night, when the Jews lost their valiant leader.

Q. What reply did Judas Machabeus make to those who would have persuaded him not to encounter such an overwhelming force?

A. He said, "If our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren." This heroism was the more remarkable as the greater part of his own army had fled through fear, leaving Judas only eight hundred men.

Q. Who was chosen as successor of Judas Machabeus in the government of Judea?

A. His brother Jonathan, who was equally brave and equally devoted to the interests of religion.

Q. How did Jonathan succeed in warring against the enemies of his country?

A. He twice defeated Bacchides, with whom he then concluded a treaty, which secured peace to Judea for nearly fourteen years. So honored was Jonathan at home and abroad that kings, we are told, sought his friendship, and the high priesthood was conferred on him by Alexander, son of Antiochus.

Q. How was this peace disturbed?

A. Demetrius, the rival of Alexander, being killed in battle with the latter, his son who succeeded him, appointed Apollonius, the known enemy of the Jews, as his general. Apollonius entered Judea at the head of a large army, but was met and defeated by Jonathan.

Q. With what nations did Jonathan renew treaties of peace and friendship?

A. With the Romans and the Lacedemonians.

Q. What befel Jonathan soon after?

A. He was treacherously taken prisoner by an ambitious man named Tryphon. His brother Simon hearing of what had befallen Jonathan, sent to Jerusalem, assembled the people, and offered himself as their leader, in place of his brother, which offer they gladly accepted, and promised to obey him in all things.

Q. What was Simon's first care on assuming the government of Judea and the office of High Priest?

A. His first care was to fortify Jerusalem, furnish its walls, and place a garrison in Joppa.

Q. What did Tryphon when he found that Simon was preparing to attack him?

A. He sent messengers to say that he would set Jonathan at liberty if his two sons were sent him as hostages, and a hundred talents of silver paid him.

Q. Was this done?

A. Yes, but Tryphon, when he got the two sons in his power, refused to liberate the father, and entered Judea with the intention of laying the country waste.

Q. What did Tryphon then do?

A. Finding that Simon every where repulsed his attacks, he put Jonathan and his sons to death.

Q. How long did Simon govern Judea?

A. Nine years, during which time he continued and completed all that his father and brothers had commenced for the good of the people, repaired and rebuilt what had been destroyed by successive wars, and restored the temple and the city to most of their former splendor. He also repelled all attacks from abroad, and renewed treaties of peace with the Greeks and Romans.

Q. How did Simon die?

A. He was murdered, with two of his sons, by the contrivance of Ptolemy, his son-in-law, who hoped to rule in his place, but was happily disappointed.

Q. Who succeeded him ?

A. His son John, surnamed Hyrcanus, whom his father had appointed general of the army. It was Ptolemy's design to kill him also, but he received intelligence of the murder of his father and brothers in time to take proper precautions.

Q. What was the character of John Hyrcanus ?

A. He was no less brave and pious than his father and brothers, and had gained a great victory during his father's lifetime over a large army sent by Antiochus, son of Demetrius, to invade Judea.

Q. How long did John Hyrcanus govern Judea ?

A. About thirty-one years. His government was as prosperous for Judea as that of his father and brothers, and amongst other great and praiseworthy actions, he destroyed the schismatical temple built two hundred years before, on Mount Garizim in Samaria.

Q. Who succeeded John Hyrcanus ?

A. His son Aristobulus, who caused himself to be crowned as king, being the first who did so from the destruction of the monarchy at the Babylonian captivity.

Q. Was Aristobulus true to the character of his noble house ?

A. No, he was odious for his cruelty even to his own family, having murdered his mother and one of his brothers.

Q. How long did this wicked man rule Judea ?

A. He reigned only one year.

Q. By whom was Aristobulus succeeded?

A. By his brother Alexander Jannæus, who died a natural death after a troubled reign of twenty-seven years.

Q. To whom did Alexander leave the sovereign power?

A. To Alexandra his queen, who caused her younger son Hyrcanus, to be made high priest. After the death of the queen, her son Hyrcanus assumed the sovereignty, but being of a mild and easy disposition was soon dethroned by his brother Aristobulus.

Q. How did the Jews lose their independence?

A. The Romans having assisted Hyrcanus to recover the throne, Herod, an Idumean by birth, taking advantage of the domestic troubles of the Jews, invaded the country, and possessed himself of the sovereign power, his usurpation being sanctioned by the Roman Emperor Augustus.

Q. What remarkable prophecies were fulfilled by this usurpation of Herod?

A. That Esau (that is, Edom or Idumea), should one day shake off the yoke of his brother Israel, and that the Messiah should come when the sceptre departed from Juda.





JESUS FALLS UNDER THE CROSS.



THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Q. What books of the Bible are comprised in the New Testament?

A. The four Gospels of St. Mathew, St. Luke, St. Mark, and St. John; the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and St. Jude, and the Apocalypse of St. John.

Q. What is contained in the Gospels?

A. The history of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ, his miracles, his passion, his death, and his glorious resurrection and ascension.

Q. What is comprised in the Acts of the Apostles?

A. The history of the foundation of the Church, with the labors and sufferings of the first Apostles.

Q. What do the Epistles contain?

A. The Epistles contain the precepts and instructions given by the Apostles to the primitive Christians.

Q. And what is the Apocalypse?

A. The Apocalypse is a revelation made to St. John the Evangelist in the island of Patmos, and may be considered the prophetic and mysterious history of the latter days of the Church on earth.

Q. How long after the fall of our first parents did the promised Messiah come on earth?

A. About four thousand years.

Q. In what condition was the world at the time of his appearance?

A. The world was plunged in the darkness of idolatry, with the single exception of the small province of Judea, and even the people of that one province, the Jews, who alone adored the true God, were divided into several sects, such as the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians, and others.

Q. Of what race was the Messiah born?

A. He was born of the tribe of Juda, and the family of David, as had been foretold by many of the prophets; his mother was Mary, an humble virgin of Nazareth, daughter of Joachim and Anne, and espoused to Joseph, an aged man, by trade a carpenter.

Q. How did the incarnation of the Messiah take place?

A. The archangel Gabriel was sent by God to announce to the virgin spouse of Joseph that the Son of God should become flesh in her chaste womb.

Q. How did the angel salute the Blessed Virgin?

A. He said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women."

Q. How did the Blessed Virgin receive this salutation?

A. She was much troubled, and knew not what it meant.

Q. What did the angel Gabriel then say?

A. "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God; behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.

He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High."

Q. What was Mary's answer?

A. "How can this be done, because I know not man?"

Q. What did the angel reply?

A. He replied; "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and, therefore, also, the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Q. In what words did the Blessed Virgin signify her consent?

A. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me, according to thy word."

Q. What took place at that moment?

A. The Son of God, the second person of the Most Holy Trinity, descending from heaven, assumed human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Q. Of what did the angel then inform Mary?

A. That her cousin, St. Elizabeth, already far advanced in years, was also about to bring forth a son, and was already six months gone with child.

Q. What did the Blessed Virgin then do?

A. She went in haste to visit her cousin in the mountains of Judca, and remained with her three months.

Q. How did St. Elizabeth salute her holy cousin on her arrival?

A. She said, "Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; and whence is this

to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to visit me?"

Q. How did the Blessed Virgin reply?

A. In the words of that beautiful canticle, called the *Magnificat*, which is sung in the Vesper Service of the Church, and begins "My soul doth magnify the Lord."

Q. What great prophecy is contained in the *Magnificat*?

A. "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." These sublime words, put in the mouth of the Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost himself, clearly foretell the great honor and devotion which the faithful in all ages have paid, and ever shall pay, to the virgin mother of God.

Q. Who was St. Elizabeth?

A. She was the wife of Zachary, a holy priest, and was herself descended from the race of Aaron.

Q. What remarkable circumstances preceded and accompanied the birth of her son?

A. The angel Gabriel had appeared to Zachary in the temple, and announced to him the birth of a son whom he should call John, and who should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth; Zachary manifesting some incredulity, on account of his wife's advanced age, the angel told him that, as a sign, he should be deprived of the power of speech until after the fulfilment of the promise, which took place accordingly, and Zachary remained dumb till after the birth of his son.

Q. Where did St. John spend his youth?

A. He spent his youth in the desert, until the time for commencing his mission had arrived. He then began to preach penance and to baptise, from which latter office he was called John the Baptist.

Q. In what capacity was St. John the Baptist foretold by the prophet Isaiah?

A. As the precursor, or forerunner of Our Lord, for whose coming he was to prepare the people by preaching penance.

Q. What kind of life did St. John lead in the desert?

A. He led a life of retirement, prayer, and mortification. His food was locusts and wild honey; his garment was of camel's hair fastened by a leathern girdle.

Q. Where did the Blessed Virgin bring forth her divine son?

A. At Bethlehem, a small town of Juda, not far from Jerusalem, as had been foretold by the prophet Micheas.

Q. How did it happen that the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph were then at Bethlehem?

A. The Roman Emperor Augustus, had issued an edict ordering the enrolment of all the nations subject to him, each according to their tribes and families; in obedience to this decree, the Blessed Virgin and her holy spouse had gone to Bethlehem, the city of David, from whom they were both lineally descended.

Q. In what place was the Saviour born?

A. He was born in a cave that was used as a stable,

because the inns being all full, and St. Joseph and his holy spouse very poor, they were forced to take shelter in that wretched place from the inclemency of the winter night, being the twenty-fifth of December.

Q. To whom was the birth of the Messiah first made known?

A. To some shepherds who were feeding their flocks on the plains of Bethlehem. To them the angels appeared, singing in the sky,—“Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will;” and one of the heavenly company announced to the shepherds that the *Saviour, Christ the Lord*, was born to them, and that they should find him in the city of David wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger.

Q. Did the shepherds go to search for the heaven-born child?

A. Yes, they went immediately to Bethlehem, and found the child, the Scripture says, with Mary his mother, and kneeling down they adored him.

Q. When was the holy name of Jesus given our divine Lord?

A. On the eighth day after his birth, being the day when, according to the Jewish rite, he received circumcision.

Q. On what day does the Church commemorate this event?

A. On the first day of January, honored as the Feast of the Circumcision.

Q. How was Our Saviour's birth revealed to the Gentiles?

A. By a star which guided three wise men, said to have been kings, to Jerusalem from the East. This

was the star foretold by the false prophet Balaam, and that prophecy had been preserved by tradition amongst the pagan nations of the East.

Q. What happened when these wise men, or Magi, reached Jerusalem?

A. The star disappeared from their eyes, and they, believing their journey at an end, went to the king's palace, inquiring "Where is he that is born king of the Jews, for," said they, "we have seen his star in the East, and are come to adore him."

Q. How did King Herod act on hearing this news?

A. He assembled the chief priests and scribes, and inquired of them where the Christ was to be born; they answered,—“In Bethlehem of Juda, for so it is written by the prophet.” Herod then sent the wise men to seek diligently for the child, and to return and let him know when they had found him, that he, too, might go and adore him.

Q. How did the three Magi discover the place where Our Lord was?

A. By the star which re-appeared to them, and went before them till it stood over where the child was. Going in, they found the Desired of all nations in the stable, with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him, offering gifts, as to a king, of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Q. Why did Herod request the wise men to bring him word when they should have found the child?

A. Because he meant to destroy him, lest he should, in time, deprive him of his kingdom.

Q. How was this wicked design frustrated?

A. The Magi were admonished in sleep not to return to him, and they went, accordingly, by another way to their own country.

Q. By what festival does the Church commemorate the adoration of the wise men?

A. By the Feast of the Epiphany, or Manifestation to the Gentiles, solemnized on the sixth day of January.

Q. With what rite of the Mosaic law did the Blessed Virgin comply on the fortieth day after the birth of her divine son?

A. She complied with the law which decreed that women should be purified in the temple; at the same time she presented her divine Son to his Eternal Father.

Q. What sacrifice did she offer on that occasion?

A. The sacrifice ordained for the poor, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

Q. What holy persons bore testimony to Our Lord at his presentation?

A. A holy old man named Simeon, and a prophetess, named Anna. The former had received a promise from God that he should not die till his eyes had seen the salvation of Israel; the holy woman, Anna, had served for many years day and night in the temple.

Q. On what day does the Church commemorate the two-fold mystery of the purification, and the presentation in the temple?

A. On the second day of February, called Candlemas Day, when wax tapers are blessed and distributed amongst the faithful, in remembrance of the words of

holy Simeon, applied to the infant Saviour, "a light to the revelation of the Gentiles."

Q. What did Herod when he found that the wise men had eluded him?

A. He cruelly ordered a general massacre of all the male children in and around Bethlehem, of two years old and under, hoping thus to ensure the destruction of the infant Messiah.

Q. How did the holy infant escape?

A. An angel appeared to St. Joseph in his sleep, and warned him to fly with the child and his mother into Egypt, and to remain there until he should tell him to return. St. Joseph did as he was commanded and set out for Egypt that same night, with the divine infant and his mother.

Q. How long did the holy family remain in Egypt?

A. About eight years, when an angel appeared again to St. Joseph, and told him that Herod was dead, commanding him at the same time to take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel.

Q. Did St. Joseph obey this mandate?

A. Yes, he immediately set out with his holy spouse and her divine Son, but hearing, on the way, that Archelaus, the son of Herod, reigned in Judea, he was afraid to return thither, and being again admonished in his sleep, went to Galilee, where he took up his abode in Nazareth. By this means, the prophecy was fulfilled, that our blessed Lord should be called a Nazarite.

Q. How is our divine Lord supposed to have spent his time at Nazareth ?

A. He is supposed to have assisted St. Joseph in his carpenter work.

Q. What remarkable circumstance occurred when our blessed Lord was about twelve years old ?

A. He having accompanied his mother and St. Joseph to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pasch, remained behind them in the city, they supposing him with some of the numerous friends and relatives who were journeying together ; when they missed the divine child they returned in haste to Jerusalem and found him after three days, in the temple, disputing with the doctors of the law, and astonishing all by his words of wisdom.

Q. What did his mother say to him when she thus found him ?

A. She asked him why he had done so to her, and said that she and St. Joseph had sought him sorrowing.

Q. What was Our Lord's reply ?

A. "How is it that you sought me, knew you not that I must be about my Father's business?" Nevertheless, the Scripture says that he went down to Nazareth with his holy mother, and was subject to her and St. Joseph.

Q. What was the preaching of St. John the Baptist in the desert, and on the banks of the Jordan where he opened his mission ?

A. His preaching was "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Q. Did many of the people go to hear him ?

A. Yes, great multitudes resorted to him for instruction, and for baptism. Amongst others went thither our divine Lord himself, anxious to give an example of humility.

Q. What did St. John when he saw Our Lord coming to him for baptism ?

A. He would have prevented him from subjecting himself to such humiliation, saying : “ I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me ? ” But our Lord answered, “ Suffer it to be so now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice.” St. John obeyed, and baptized him.

Q. What prodigy took place at this baptism ?

A. The heavens opened over the head of our divine Lord, and the Holy Ghost descended on him in the form of a dove ; at the same time a voice was heard from heaven, saying—“ This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased ! ”

Q. What did St. John say when he saw Our Lord coming towards him on the following day ?

A. He said, “ Behold the Lamb of God ; behold him who taketh away the sins of the world.”

Q. What befel St. John soon after this ?

A. He was cast into prison by order of Herod the Tetrarch, because he had rebuked him for having contracted an incestuous marriage with Herodias, his brother's wife.

Q. What did our blessed Lord say of St. John the Baptist about this time ?

A. That amongst those born of woman there was

not a greater prophet than John the Baptist ; that he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, and that it was of him the prophet spoke when he said, " Behold I send my angel before thy face who shall prepare thy way before thee."

Q. Can you relate the circumstances of St. John's martyrdom ?

A. Yes ; Herod made a great supper on his birthday for all the princes and tribunes and chief men of Galilee, when the daughter of Herodias came in and danced before them, and her dancing so pleased the king that he told her to ask of him what she would, and that he would give it to her. Instructed by her wicked mother, she asked the head of John the Baptist, who was accordingly beheaded that night, and his head given her on a dish.

Q. What age was Our Lord when he was baptised ?

A. He was thirty years of age.

Q. What did he immediately after his baptism ?

A. He retired to the desert, where he spent forty days and forty nights in prayer and meditation, without either eating or drinking.

Q. What remarkable circumstance occurred to our blessed Lord in the desert ?

A. He was tempted by the devil in various ways, which he doubtless permitted for our instruction, to show us how to resist temptation. At length, he commanded the devil to leave him, when angels came and ministered to him.

Q. Whither did Our Lord go after leaving the desert?

A. He went into Galilee, where he taught openly in the synagogues.

Q. Why did he leave Nazareth?

A. Because the people of that town, indignant at his preaching, thought to throw him from the brow of the hill on which it is built.

Q. How did he escape their fury?

A. The Gospel relates that "passing through the midst of them, he went his way."

Q. What was Our Lord's first miracle?

A. The changing water into wine at the wedding of Cana, in Galilee, this he did at the request of his blessed mother who, perceiving that the wine had failed, wished to spare the confusion of the entertainers, and told her divine Son that there was no wine.

Q. Whither did Our Lord go after this?

A. He went to Capharnaum, a sea-coast city on the borders of Zabulon and Nepthtali.

Q. What miracle did Our Lord perform at Capharnaum?

A. He healed the servant of a centurion, who hearing of Jesus, sent the ancients to ask him to heal his servant.

Q. Did Our Lord go to his house as desired?

A. He did, and the centurion seeing him coming, advanced to meet him, saying, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, say but the word, and my servant shall be healed."

Q. On hearing this what did Jesus say ?

A. He said, turning to the multitude who followed him, " Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel." And the Scripture says, they who were sent being returned to the house, found the servant whole who had been sick.

Q. What miracle did Our Lord perform at Naim ?

A. He raised to life the son of a widow, touched by the grief of the afflicted mother whom he met following her son's funeral.

Q. Amongst the great number of his disciples did not Our Lord choose some to abide with him more particularly, and to aid him in his mission ?

A. Yes, he chose twelve, to whom he gave the name of Apostles, which signifies *sent*, because after his death, they were destined to preach the Gospel to all nations.

Q. Who were these twelve apostles ?

A. Peter, who was first called Simon, his brother Andrew, James the major, and James the minor, so called on account of their respective stature, Thomas, Philip, John, Bartholomew, Simon, surnamed Zelotes, Jude the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Q. What was the employment of most of the apostles before they were called by our blessed Lord ?

A. Most of them were fishermen on the sea of Galilee.

Q. Whither did Our Lord retire with his disciples soon after the miracles above related ?

A. He retired with them to a mountain near Ca-

pharnaum where he preached to them a sermon known in Scripture as the Sermon on the Mount.

Q. Can you repeat any portion of this Sermon ?

A. Yes, the eight beatitudes, which are as follows :
“ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven ; blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth ; blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted ; blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled ; blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy ; blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God ; blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called the children of God ; blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Q. What form of prayer did Our Lord frame for his disciples ?

A. The Lord’s Prayer, commonly called the “ Our Father.”

Q. Where did Our Lord preach the Gospel ?

A. Wherever an occasion presented itself, in city, town, or country, in the temple, and in the synagogues.

Q. What did he preach to the people ?

A. He every where announced that the Messiah, so long desired by the patriarchs, and promised by the prophets, had come ; every where, too, he preached penance, the contempt of riches, the forgiveness of injuries, and the denial of self.

Q. By what means did Our Lord usually instruct the Jews ?

A. By means of parables, the principal of which

were the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, Dives and Lazarus, the Good Samaritan, the Good Shepherd, and the Pharisee and Publican.

Q. What lesson did Our Saviour teach us by the parable of the Prodigal Son ?

A. The folly of the sinner who wanders away from God in the desert of sin, and the great goodness of God who, like the father of the prodigal son is ever willing to receive him on his return.

Q. What are we to learn from the parable of the Unjust Steward ?

A. That we may and should, like the unjust steward, make friends for ourselves with the mammon of iniquity, which is the wealth of this world, by applying to good purposes, and especially in charity to the poor, and to religion, the means which God has bestowed upon us.

Q. What lesson is conveyed to our understanding by the parable of Dives and Lazarus ?

A. The terrible punishment which awaits in the other world, those who close their hearts against the poor.

Q. What are we to learn from the parable of the Good Samaritan ?

A. That we are to consider all mankind as our brethren, but in a very special manner the poor and the afflicted.

Q. And what does Our Lord teach us by the parable of the Good Shepherd ?

A. The tender care and solicitude wherewith he

himself, the shepherd of our souls, watches over our eternal welfare.

Q. And what does he teach us by the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican?

A. The great esteem in which our God holds the virtue of humility, and his hatred of pride and vain-glory.

Q. What miracle did our Lord perform in the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, showing his regard for humility?

A. Being met by a woman of Canaan, who besought him to cure her daughter who was grievously troubled by a devil, he, at first, refused to hear her prayer, saying that he was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. But the woman persevering in her humble petition, although the disciples would have driven her away, our divine Lord said to her, "O, woman, great is thy faith, be it done to thee as thou wilt," and her daughter was cured from that hour.

Q. What miracle did our Lord perform near Jericho, showing the efficacy of perseverance in prayer?

A. He cured a blind man who sat begging by the way-side, and who, finding that our blessed Lord was passing by, began to cry out, "Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!" Several times he was rebuked by the disciples, and told to hold his peace, but still the more urgently did he renew his petition, whereupon our divine Lord restored his sight.

Q. What great miracle did our Lord perform in the desert for the multitude who had gone out to hear him?

A. Compassionating their necessities, for they had

been all the day fasting, he so multiplied five loaves and two fishes, which a boy chanced to have, that not only did the multitude all eat in abundance, but twelve baskets of the fragments were carried away.

Q. What stupendous miracle did our Lord perform at Bethany?

A. He raised to life Lazarus, the brother of Mary Magdalen and her sister Martha, although he had been three days in the grave.

Q. Who else did he raise from the dead?

A. The daughter of Jairus, whom he took by the hand, and saying, "Maiden, I say to thee, arise," she that had been dead arose, restored to life and health.

Q. What effect did these miracles of our Lord produce?

A. They made him known throughout all Judea; but they, at the same time, excited the jealousy and hatred of the Scribes and Pharisees, and the Jewish priests.

Q. What directions did our Lord give his apostles?

A. To preach the Gospel, and to confirm the doctrine they taught by miracles, the power of working which he imparted to them.

Q. What did he foretel them?

A. That they should suffer persecution for his sake, and should be brought before governors and princes; but that proper words should be put in their mouths to speak, and that the Spirit of their Father should speak in them.

Q. Did our Lord send any others on the mission besides the twelve Apostles?

A. Yes; he appointed seventy-two of his disciples to go, two and two before him, into every town and city, announcing his coming. On them, also, he bestowed the gift of miracles.

Q. Were there any persons of distinction amongst the disciples of our Lord?

A. Yes; there were many, but they dared not profess their faith openly, fearing the vengeance of the Scribes and Pharisees. The two of these particularly mentioned are Nicodemus, who came to our Lord by night for instruction, and Joseph of Arimathea.

Q. What did our Lord prophecy concerning the Temple?

A. That it should be utterly demolished, so that one stone should not remain upon another.

Q. When was this prophecy fulfilled?

A. It was partially fulfilled when the Roman Emperor Titus took Jerusalem after a siege of ten years; and the work of destruction left unfinished by Titus, was entirely completed by the Emperor Julian the Apostate, who, foolishly bent on proving our Lord's prophecy false, attempted to rebuild the Temple, and dug out the very foundations, so that the prophecy was literally fulfilled, not one stone being left on another, and so it remains to this day.

Q. How did our Lord manifest his zeal, on finding buyers and sellers trafficking in the Temple?

A. He made a scourge of little cords, and drove out the sheep and oxen from the court of the Temple, scat-

tered the money of the money-changers, and overthrew their tables; to the sellers of doves he said, "Take these things hence, and make not the house of my father a den of thieves."

Q. What did our blessed Lord, when he saw the hatred of the Jews becoming more violent against him?

A. He left Jerusalem for a time, and retired into Galilee.

Q. What occurred when our Lord was on his way to Galilee?

A. Having reached Sichar, a city of Samaria, he seated himself on Jacob's well to rest, while his disciples went into the city to buy provisions; meanwhile there came to draw water a Samaritan woman, of whom he asked a drink, and the woman was surprised by the request, as the Jews were not permitted to hold any intercourse with the Samaritans.

Q. What did our Lord then do?

A. He began to discourse with the woman on the life which is everlasting, and, finally, by mentioning to her some sins of her past life, convinced her that he was a prophet. The woman then ran to the city, and telling the people that a great prophet sat by the well, many of them came to him and besought him to remain with them. He accordingly staid a little time in their city, and during his stay, converted numbers to the faith.

Q. Mention what occurred during a storm on the sea of Galilee.

A. Our Lord had gone into a ship, in order to avoid

the pressure of the multitude that followed him. After having thence instructed the people on the shore, he directed his disciples to set sail for the opposite coast ; on their way a storm arose, and our Lord being awoke by his disciples, rebuked the winds and the waves, saying, "Peace, be still," and immediately there was a great calm.

Q. What remarkable circumstance occurred to St. Peter on the lake of Genesareth ?

A. St. Peter and his companions were in a ship on the lake, our Lord having remained alone on the shore to pray ; the ship being tossed about on the waves, our Lord walked to it on the water, and the disciples, supposing it to be an apparition, were afraid, till the voice of their divine Master reassured them, when St. Peter asked him, if it were indeed himself, to make him, too, walk on the water towards him, and our divine Lord saying, "Come ;" St. Peter went down from the ship, and walked on the water.

Q. What happened then ?

A. St. Peter having walked a little way, his courage failed him ; and beginning to sink, he cried, "Lord, save me ;" whereupon our gracious Lord took him by the hand, saying, "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt ?"

Q. What did the people think on seeing the wonderful miracles of our Lord ?

A. Some thought he was John the Baptist risen from the dead ; others that he was Elias, come down

from heaven ; and others again, that he was Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

Q. What was the reply of St. Peter, when our Lord asked his disciples who they thought he was ?

A. St. Peter's reply was, "Thou art Christ, the son of the living God."

Q. What remarkable words did our Saviour then address to Simon Peter ?

A. Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven ; and I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Q. What did our blessed Lord mean by changing the name of his apostle from Simon to Peter, and saying then, "Upon this rock I will build my Church?"

A. Because the word Peter, or Petrus, means a rock, and Peter was truly the rock on which our Lord built his Church.

Q. What other mysterious words did our Lord address to Peter on that occasion ?

A. "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven."

Q. What did our Lord foretell his disciples about this time ?

A. That he should go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the ancients and chief priests ; that he should be put to death, and on the third day rise again.

Q. By what miraculous event did he strengthen his apostles a few days after this?

A. Taking with him Peter, James, and John, he retired to a mountain, called Thabor, to pray, and whilst in prayer he was transfigured, assuming the appearance of a glorified body, his face radiant as the sun, and his garments white and shining.

Q. What great personages of the old law were seen talking with him?

A. Moses and Elias, who conversed with him on his approaching passion and death in Jerusalem.

Q. What did St. Peter exclaim on seeing this glorious sight?

A. He exclaimed, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias."

Q. What other prodigy then took place?

A. Whilst St. Peter yet spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed our Lord and his two heavenly companions, and a voice from the cloud was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." The disciples, being afraid, fell flat on the ground, but our Lord reassured them and told them to rise, when they saw only himself, under his ordinary appearance.

Q. What did our Lord then tell his apostles?

A. He told them not to speak of the vision they had seen until after he was risen from the dead.

Q. What did our Lord do soon after his transfiguration?

A. He set out for Jerusalem with his disciples,

whom he told that the hour of his passion was at hand.

Q. What miraculous cure did our Lord perform on his way to Jerusalem?

A. That of ten lepers, who, seeing him pass, stood afar off, and cried out, "Jesus, master, have mercy on us." Our Saviour told them to go and show themselves to the priests, and as they went they were made clean.

Q. Did they return to thank our divine Lord for having healed them?

A. Only one of them returned to thank him, and our Lord said to him, "Were not ten made clean, where are the nine?" From this we see that Almighty God expects us to thank him for his graces and mercies.

Q. What occurred at the house of a Pharisee where our Lord was at table?

A. A woman, named Mary Magdalen, the sister of Lazarus before mentioned, who had been a great sinner, came in, bringing an alabaster box full of precious ointment, with which she anointed our Lord's feet, having first washed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hair.

Q. What did our blessed Lord say to the Pharisee and those around him who were scandalized at his kind reception of a public sinner?

A. He said, "Many sins are forgiven her, because she loved much." To her he said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And when Judas Iscariot began to mur-

mur, saying that the price of the ointment had better been given to the poor, our Lord added, "The poor, you have always with you, but me you have not always; let her alone, she hath done it for my burial, and I say to you that wherever this Gospel is preached in the whole world, this thing shall be told in memory of her."

Q. What signs did our Lord say should precede the end of the world?

A. He said that there should be wars and rumors of wars, that nation should rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, that there should be famines and earthquakes, and such tribulation as there had not been from the beginning of the world; and that after all these things, the sun and moon should be darkened and the stars fall from heaven.

Q. How did he describe his own coming at the last day?

A. He said that the Son of Man would come in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty, and that he would send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice, to gather together his elect from the four winds.

Q. How did our Lord say that he would address the just, who on that day are to be placed on his right hand?

A. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom that was prepared for you from the beginning of the world."

Q. And what was he to say to the wicked, on his left hand?

A. "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Q. How did our divine Lord enter Jerusalem a few days before the Pasch, which he went to eat there with his disciples?

A. He entered riding on an ass, the ass being then ridden by persons of distinction; his disciples laid their garments on the back of the ass; many of the multitude spread their garments on the way before him, and others cut down green branches from the trees, all with one voice crying out—"Hosannah to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; hosannah in the highest."

Q. On what day does the Church celebrate this triumphant entry of our Lord into Jerusalem?

A. On Palm Sunday, when branches of palms and other evergreens are blessed and distributed amongst the faithful, who hold them in their hands during the reading of the passion on that day.

Q. Were not the enemies of our blessed Lord displeased by this triumphant entry into Jerusalem?

A. Yes, their jealous hatred was so much increased by this manifestation of popular feeling towards our divine Lord that they resolved to put him to death and began to deliberate on the means of getting him into their power.

Q. By what means did they succeed in their malicious design?

A. By means of the treachery of one of the apostles, named Judas Iscariot. Whilst they were deliberating on the course to pursue in order to capture our divine Lord without raising a popular tumult, Judas came to

them, and offered to deliver up his master to them for thirty pieces of silver.

Q. What directions did our Lord give to his disciples when he sent them into the city to prepare the Pasch?

A. He told them to follow a man whom they should meet carrying a pitcher of water, and to ask the master of the house into which he entered for a room in which to prepare the Pasch. They did so, and found every thing ready as he had told them.

Q. What did our Lord say to his apostles when they were about to eat the Pasch together?

A. He said: "With desire, I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer, for I say to you that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Q. What remarkable act of humility did our Lord perform at that last supper?

A. He arose from table, laid aside his outer garment, and having girded himself with a towel, poured water into a basin and washed the feet of his disciples.

Q. What did our Lord foretell his apostles on that occasion?

A. That one of them was about to betray him.

Q. What did our Lord when he and his apostles had eaten the Pasch, and fully accomplished the Mosaic rite?

A. He took bread, and giving thanks, broke it; then giving of it to each of the apostles, he said; "This is my body which is given for you, do this for a commemoration of me." Taking wine in like manner, and giving to his apostles, he said: "This is the chalice,

the new testament in my blood which shall be shed for you."

Q. What did our Lord tell his apostles when this solemn rite was over?

A. He told them to love one another as he himself loved them; he told them also that his hour was come, and that before the night had passed, all of them should forsake him.

Q. What did our Lord say to Peter, when that apostle began to protest that he would never abandon him?

A. He said, "Amen; I say unto thee, before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice."

Q. Whither did our Lord proceed after leaving the supper-room?

A. To the garden of Olives, where, taking with him Peter, James, and John, whom he left at a little distance in the garden, he retired to a lonely grotto to pray, telling his three chosen apostles that his soul was sorrowful even unto death, and asking them to stay and watch with him.

Q. What did our Lord then do?

A. Falling prostrate on the ground, he besought his eternal Father, saying, "My Father, if it be possible let this chalice pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Q. When our Lord returned to his three apostles, how did he find them?

A. He found them asleep, whereupon he said to Peter, "What, could you not watch one little hour with me?" But they soon forgot this mild reproach,

for when he returned a second and a third time, he found them still asleep.

Q. What extraordinary proof is related in Scripture of our Lord's agony in the garden?

A. His anguish of soul was so intense, that it produced a bloody sweat, which trickled from every pore of his sacred body, and ran in large drops to the ground, when an angel from heaven came to comfort him, bereft as he was of human consolation.

Q. What did our Lord say to his apostles when, going to them at the end of his three hours' prayer, he found them still asleep?

A. He said, "My hour is come: rise, let us go; behold, he that will betray me is at hand."

Q. Who appeared at that moment?

A. The traitor Judas, with a multitude of armed men.

Q. What did Judas then?

A. Advancing to his divine Master, he saluted him with a kiss, that being the sign which he had given to the Jews.

Q. What was the touching reproach addressed by our divine Lord to his treacherous apostle?

A. "Friend, whereto art thou come? What! dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"

Q. What great proof of his divine power did our Lord give before he gave himself up to his enemies?

A. He advanced towards the armed men who came with Judas, and asked them whom they sought; they

replied, "Jesus of Nazareth;" whereupon our divine Lord said in a loud voice, "I am he;" and immediately they fell backward, confounded by the divine majesty of his presence. He then gave himself up.

Q. How did the disciples act?

A. They at first made a show of resistance, and St. Peter, drawing a sword, cut off the right ear of a servant of the high priest; but our Lord commanded them to desist, saying, "Thinkest thou that if I asked my Father he would not send me more than twelve legions of angels;" and, having healed the servant's ear, he suffered himself to be led away, when the disciples all fled and left him alone in the hands of his enemies.

Q. Where was our Lord then led?

A. To the house of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the ancients were assembled for the purpose of condemning him.

Q. Did any of the disciples follow their Master to the house of Caiaphas?

A. Yes, St. Peter followed him afar off, and entering, stood at a fire in the hall amongst the officers and servants, awaiting the result.

Q. What occurred while St. Peter was at the fire?

A. A servant-maid accused him of having been with Jesus of Nazareth; but St. Peter denied it, saying, "I know not the man." The charge was again repeated by another person, when St. Peter again denied that he knew Jesus of Nazareth. A third time, he was ac-

cused with being a Galilean, and a follower of Jesus, when he cursed and swore that he knew not the man. At that moment the cock crew, and Peter remembering the words of his divine Master, went forth, the Scripture says, and wept bitterly.

Q. On what did Caiphas question our divine Lord?

A. He questioned him chiefly on his doctrine, and produced many false witnesses to prove that he had preached doctrines contrary to the law of Moses. Our Lord remaining utterly silent, at length the high priest said to him, "I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Q. What did our Lord reply?

A. He replied, "Thou hast said it," and he added, "Hereafter thou shalt see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Q. Was the high priest convinced by these words?

A. No, he rent his garments, saying—"He hath blasphemed, what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy, what think you?"

Q. What did they all reply?

A. They replied with one voice, "He is guilty of death."

Q. To whom was our blessed Lord afterward sent for judgment, the Jews not having the power of life and death?

A. He was sent to Pontius Pilate the Roman gov-

ernor, by whom he was sent to Herod, Tetrarch of Galilee, who was then in Jerusalem, our Lord being by birth a Galilean.

Q. What did Herod?

A. Herod, being unable to obtain any sign or miracle from our Lord, which he had desired to see from curiosity, clothed him in the white garment of a fool and sent him back to Pilate.

Q. How did Pilate act?

A. Pilate, seeing that it was for envy the Jews had delivered our Lord, and that he was innocent of any crime, was anxious to set him free, but the Jews clamoring for judgment upon him, Pilate caused him to be scourged by his soldiers, then brought him to a balcony and showed him to them, bruised and mangled as he was, supposing that the sight would move them to pity.

Q. Did the Jews relent at the sight of our blessed Lord in that sad condition?

A. No, they cried out the more, "Crucify him! crucify him!" and when Pilate asked them why they wished to put him to death, whereas he was innocent, they cried out, "His blood be on us, and on our children! away with him! crucify him!" Then Pilate, taking water, washed his hands before them, to show that he was not guilty of the death of that just man, nevertheless delivered him to the Jews to be crucified, according to the Roman law.

Q. What did Judas when he heard that his divine Master was condemned?

A. Being filled with remorse, he brought back the thirty pieces of silver saying to the chief priests and ancients, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said, "what is that to us? look thou to it;" whereupon the wretched Judas, throwing the pieces of silver on the ground went and hung himself in despair.

Q. What use did the chief priests make of the thirty pieces of silver returned by Judas?

A. They bought with them a piece of ground called "the potter's field," to be a burying place for strangers; on which account it was called Haceldama, or the field of blood.

Q. Whom did the Jews compel to assist our Lord in carrying his cross?

A. Simon the Cyrencan, who happened to be coming into the city at the time.

Q. Who were crucified with our Lord?

A. Two thieves, who were placed one on either side, in order to make his death more ignominious.

Q. What inscription was placed over the cross by Pilate's orders?

A. "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews." It was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, so that all might read.

Q. How long did our Lord hang on the cross before he expired?

A. He hung on the cross three hours, during which

time his blessed Mother, his beloved disciple St. John, and Mary Magdalen, remained with him, witnessing his sufferings, and listening to the cruel mockery and the impious blasphemy of the infuriate mob who surrounded the cross.

Q. What remarkable words were uttered by our blessed Lord on the cross?

A. First, a prayer for his enemies; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Secondly, a recommendation of his mother to St. John, and of St. John to his mother—to St. John, "Behold thy mother," to the Blessed Virgin—"Behold thy son."

Q. What other remarkable words did he speak?

A. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and to one of the thieves crucified with him who became penitent, he said: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise!" at length, when his sacred blood was all spent, and nature quite exhausted, he bowed his divine head, saying, *It is consummated,* and expired.

Q. On what day does the Church commemorate the death of our divine Lord?

A. On Good Friday, when all the churches are draped in mourning, and the faithful called together to meditate on the Death and Passion of the Son of God.

Q. What strange phenomena occurred at the death of our Saviour?

A. There was darkness over the earth for three hours; the earth trembled, rocks were rent, and many

of the dead arose and were seen walking in the streets of Jerusalem, and at the moment when our divine Lord expired, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, denoting that the old law was now at an end.

Q. What did the Roman centurion and his soldiers, who were on guard around the cross say, on witnessing these prodigies?

A. They struck their breasts and said, " Indeed this was the Son of God."

Q. Who took charge of our Lord's burial?

A. Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, who embalmed our Lord's sacred body and wrapping it in fine linen, laid it in a new sepulchre hewn out of a rock, wherein no man had yet lain.

Q. What request did the chief priests and the Pharisees make to Pilate?

A. To have our Lord's sepulchre guarded till the third day, lest the disciples should steal the body, and give out that their Master had arisen, according to his own prediction.

Q. Did Pilate grant this request?

A. He did, and giving them a guard, told them—" Go, guard it as you know." They went then and sealed the great stone which closed the mouth of the sepulchre.

Q. What happened next morning at dawn of day?

A. Our divine Lord arose gloriously from the sepulchre, and came forth, to the great terror of the guards set to watch, who through fear, became as dead men.

Q. Who came first to the sepulchre after the resurrection?

A. Some holy women, amongst whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of James.

Q. What did they behold on reaching the sepulchre?

A. The great stone was rolled back from the mouth of the sepulchre, and on it sat an angel, his raiment as snow, and his countenance as lightning.

Q. What did the angel say to the women?

A. "Fear not, for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come and see the place where the Lord was laid; and going quickly, tell ye his disciples that he is risen, and will go before you into Galilee."

Q. How did the guards act when they recovered from their first terror?

A. They fled to Jerusalem, and told the chief priests all that had happened, when money was given them to say that the disciples of Jesus had stolen his body while they slept.

Q. To whom did our divine Lord first appear?

A. To St. Mary Magdalen, who had remained weeping at the sepulchre after St. Peter and St. John had gone thence.

Q. What did our Lord say to Mary Magdalen when in her joy she would have embraced his feet?

A. He said, "Do not touch me, for I am not ascended to my Father." He charged her then to go tell the disciples that he had arisen, and would soon ascend to his Father and theirs.

Q. Did the disciples believe what Mary Magdalen and the others told them?

A. No, they at first, refused to believe them, supposing they had only imagined that they saw the things they related.

Q. To whom did our Lord next appear on the day of his resurrection?

A. To two of his disciples, on the way to Emmaus; with them he went to their lodgings, although they at first knew him not; but having expounded to them all the Scriptures, they knew him, the Scripture says, in the breaking of bread. That same evening, he appeared to others of his disciples, whilst they listened to the story of the two from Emmaus.

Q. What happened on the following Sunday, which we now call Low Sunday?

A. On that day the disciples being assembled, and with them St. Thomas Didymus, one of the apostles, who having been absent on the former occasion, refused to believe that our Lord had appeared to them. He suddenly stood in their midst, saying, "Peace be to you," and made St. Thomas feel the wounds in his hands and in his side, in order to convince his incredulity.

Q. When did our Lord again appear to his disciples?

A. When they were fishing on the sea of Galilee, where they had toiled all night, and taken nothing; but he, calling to them from the shore to let down their net on the right side, they did so, and immediately it was filled. They then said to each other,

“It is the Lord;” and St. Peter, throwing himself into the sea, swam towards him, followed by the other disciples, when our Lord partook of the dinner which they prepared.

Q. What great commission did our Lord give to St. Peter on that occasion?

A. To feed his lambs, and his sheep, meaning that he was to nourish the people and pastors of the Church with sound doctrine.

Q. What did our Lord say to his eleven remaining apostles, when they met him on the Mount by his appointment?

A. He said, “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.”

Q. On what day does the Church commemorate the resurrection of our Lord?

A. On Easter Sunday.

Q. How long did our Lord remain on earth after his resurrection?

A. Forty days, during which time he was employed instructing his apostles, and preparing them for their great mission. At the end of those forty days, he ascended into heaven from the top of Mount Olivet, in presence of his blessed mother, his apostles, and disciples.

Q. What part of the Bible contains the history of the first thirty years after our Lord's ascension?

A. The Acts of the Apostles.

Q. At what time did St. Matthew, the first of the Evangelists, write his Gospel?

A. About six or eight years after our Lord's ascension.

Q. When did St. Mark write the Gospel which bears his name?

A. About ten years after our Lord's ascension.

Q. When did St. Luke write his Gospel?

A. About twenty years after the ascension of our divine Lord. St. Luke also wrote the Acts of the Apostles, about ten years later than his Gospel.

Q. When did St. John write his Gospel?

A. About sixty-three years after our Lord's ascension.

Q. What was the first important act of the apostles after our Lord's ascension?

A. They proceeded to elect a successor for the traitor Judas, in order to fill up the vacancy in what is called the College of the Apostles, that is to say, the twelve originally appointed by our Lord. Guided by divine inspiration, their choice fell on Matthias.

Q. When did the Holy Ghost descend on the apostles, as our Lord had promised that he should?

A. Ten days after the ascension of our Lord, and fifty days after his resurrection.

Q. Can you describe the descent of the Holy Ghost?

A. The Blessed Virgin and the apostles were all assem-

bled in an upper room, awaiting the promised event, when suddenly a sound was heard as of a mighty wind coming, and there was seen parted tongues as of fire, descending on the heads of the apostles, who were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak divers tongues, which they had never before spoken.

Q. What did the people of various countries assembled in Jerusalem say, when they heard the apostles speaking their several languages?

A. They asked how it came that these men, being Jews and Galileans, spoke to them so that each heard the language of his own country.

Q. Which of the apostles preached first to the multitudes in explanation of this prodigy?

A. St. Peter, whose preaching, aided by the Holy Ghost, was so effective that some three thousand were converted and baptized, and from that we may date the foundation of the Church.

Q. What kind of life did the early Christians lead?

A. They led a life of great piety and simplicity; they had all things in common; those who were wealthy disposing of their goods and possessions for the benefit of all, and the apostles distributed amongst them what the necessities of each required.

Q. Did the apostles confirm their preaching by miracles, as our Lord had foretold?

A. Yes; they performed many and great miracles, equal, indeed, to those wrought by their divine Master, while on earth.

Q. How did the priests and the Sadducees act, when they found the apostles preaching to the people?

A. They put them in prison for a night, and next day brought them before the Council, in which the high priest presided.

Q. Which of the apostles answered for the others before the Council?

A. St. Peter, who said, amongst other things, speaking of the name of our blessed Lord, "For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved."

Q. How did the high priest and the Council act on hearing St. Peter's defence of the apostles?

A. They threatened them with the severest punishment, if they preached again such doctrines to the people; but they did not dare, at that time, to inflict corporal punishment upon them, for fear of the people. It was not long, however, until St. Peter was again arrested, and scourged, for preaching Christ crucified.

Q. Who were the deacons?

A. They were holy men, appointed by the apostles to assist them in their arduous labors, especially in the distribution of alms, and the administration of baptism.

Q. Who were the first deacons?

A. Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, seven in all.

Q. Who was the first martyr?

A. Stephen, the first of the deacons, a man of great

holiness of life, and wonderfully endowed with the gift of miracles.

Q. Why did the Jews put St. Stephen to death?

A. Because, when they dragged him before the Council, he steadfastly maintained the divinity of Christ. Enraged by his courage and fortitude, they took him out of the city and stoned him to death.

Q. What remarkable circumstance occurred at the martyrdom of St. Stephen?

A. Looking up to heaven, the holy deacon exclaimed, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of his Father." Then falling on his knees, he exclaimed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," and expired.

Q. To whom did the Jews give St. Stephen's outer garments to hold while they stoned him?

A. To a young man named Saul, a native of Tarsus, then a furious persecutor of the Christians, but afterwards a zealous apostle of Christ.

Q. What was the effect of St. Stephen's martyrdom?

A. The faithful fled in terror from Jerusalem to all the neighboring provinces, thus spreading the knowledge of the truth which is in Christ.

Q. Whither did St. Philip, the second of the deacons, go?

A. He went to Samaria, where he converted great numbers to the faith, amongst others the treasurer of Candace, queen of Ethiopia.

Q. How was Saul employed during this time?

A. He was persecuting the infant Church to the

utmost of his power ; and not content with doing so in and around Jerusalem, he asked letters of the high priest to the synagogues in Damascus, so that he might go thither in quest of any Christians who might be in that city, in order to bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Q. What occurred whilst Saul was on his way to Damascus?

A. A bright light suddenly shone around him, so dazzling that it struck him with blindness, and he heard a voice calling, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Amazed and terrified, he fell prostrate on the ground, and asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" When the answer was given him, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." Saul then asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" Arise, and go into the city," said our Lord, "and there it shall be told thee what thou must do."

Q. What did Saul then do?

A. Being unable to see, he was led by his companions to Damascus, where he remained three days and three nights without food. Being restored to sight by a holy man named Ananias, who also instructed and baptized him, Paul, as he was thenceforward called, became as zealous a Christian as he had before been a Jew, and preached Christianity in the synagogues.

Q. Were the Jews of Damascus enraged at Saul's conversion?

A. Yes; they sought to kill him, but the faithful succeeded in concealing him from their fury, and let him down from the town wall by night in a basket, so that he escaped, and returned to Jerusalem.

Q. How was St. Paul received by the apostles in Jerusalem?

A. At first they shunned him, doubting the sincerity of his conversion, and fearing that he meant to betray them; but Barnabas having introduced him to them, and related the manner of his conversion, they joyfully received him, and he appeared openly with them, preaching the faith to Jews and to Gentiles.

Q. What is meant by the word Gentiles?

A. All the nations of the earth except the Jews, who alone worshipped the true God.

Q. Who was the first Gentile converted to the faith?

A. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, dwelling in Cesarea.

Q. By whom was Cornelius converted?

A. By St. Peter, who was conducted to him in a miraculous manner.

Q. What befel St. James, brother of St. John?

A. He was beheaded by order of Herod.

Q. Why did Herod then imprison St. Peter?

A. To please the Jews, by whom that apostle was recognized as the head of the new religion.

Q. How was St. Peter delivered from prison?

A. He was delivered by an angel, who, awaking him, where he lay sleeping in the midst of his guards, desired him to arise and follow him. He did so, supposing that it was only a dream, till on reaching the city gate, it opened of itself, and the angel disappeared. Then St. Peter knew that the Lord had delivered him from the hands of Herod.

Q. What was the end of Herod?

A. He was eaten alive by worms. A terrible instance of the wrath of God against the impious sinner.

Q. How was St. Paul employed during this time?

A. Being obliged to fly from Jerusalem, the brethren conveyed him safely to Tarsus, his native city, whence, at the request of St. Barnabas, he went with him to Antioch, where they converted such multitudes of people that it was there the disciples of the new religion were first called Christians.

Q. Where else did SS. Paul and Barnabas go?

A. To the island of Cyprus, where the Roman proconsul embraced the faith, in consequence of a miracle wrought by St. Paul on a magician of his household, named Elymas, whom he struck with blindness for his obstinate incredulity.

Q. What miracle did St. Paul perform at Lystra?

A. He cured a man who had been a cripple from his birth.

Q. How were the heathen inhabitants of the place affected by this great miracle?

A. They thought that their gods had come on earth in human form, and would have offered sacrifice to St. Paul and St. Barnabas had not the two apostles prevented them from doing so, by assuring them that they were mortals like themselves, who had come amongst them to announce the true God.

Q. How did these same people of Lystra treat St. Paul a few days after?

A. Being excited against him by the malice of the

Jews, they stoned him, till they believed him dead, but when they left him he recovered, and went soon after with St. Barnabas, to preach the gospel in other places.

Q. Where, and on what occasion, was the first council held?

A. It was held in Jerusalem, and was convened by the apostles on account of a dispute raised by the Jewish converts, who would insist on having the Gentile converts subjected to the observance of the Mosaic, as well as the Christian law. This first general council, called the Council of Jerusalem, was held in the year of Our Lord 51.

Q. To what countries were St. Paul's apostolic labors principally confined?

A. To certain parts of Greece and of Asia Minor, through which countries, he traveled continually, from province to province, and from island to island, wherever the wants of the infant Church most urgently required his presence. Every where his life was in danger from the fury of the Jews.

Q. For what were Paul and his companion Silas, thrown into prison at Philippi?

A. For having cast an evil spirit out of a young woman who having been employed by magicians as a pythoness, or fortune-teller, was useless to them after her exorcism, and they, therefore, accused Paul and Silas to the magistrates, who condemned them to be scourged and imprisoned.

Q. How were St. Paul and his companion delivered?

A. At midnight, while they were praying in their

prison, an earthquake shook the walls, and threw the doors open, so that they escaped for that time the fury of their persecutors.

Q. What celebrated personage was converted by St. Paul at Athens?

A. Denis, or Dionysius, called the Areopagite.

Q. What remarkable inscription did St. Paul find on one of the pagan altars of Athens?

A. On one of them he found inscribed, "To the unknown God," from which he took occasion to explain to them, standing in the midst of the Acropolis, their chief temple, that this God to them unknown was the one true God, the great creator of heaven and earth.

Q. What occurred on St. Paul's return to Jerusalem?

A. In the midst of the great rejoicings amongst the Christians, for his safe return, he was seized by the Jews, who dragged him out of the temple, and would have killed him but for the Roman tribune who rescued him with much difficulty, but kept him a prisoner.

Q. Did the Jews still continue their persecution of St. Paul?

A. They did, and on many occasions he came near being slain by their malice. On one occasion they conspired to murder him in prison, but the conspiracy being discovered in time, the holy apostle was sent under a strong guard to Felix, the Roman governor at Cesarea, where he was kept two years in prison.

Q. What did St. Paul on finding that the Jews were intrigu-

ing to have him sent to Jerusalem, with intent to kill him on the way?

A. He appealed to Cesar, that is to say, the Emperor of Rome.

Q. What then befel St. Paul?

A. He was sent with some other prisoners to Rome, but on the way thither, the ship in which they had sailed, was wrecked on the coast of Malta. The ship was broken to pieces but for the sake of his faithful apostle, St. Paul, the Lord preserved the lives of all on board.

Q. Did St. Paul perform any miracles during his three months' stay in Malta?

A. Yes, he cured the father of his host, Publius, who was ill of fever, after which all the sick were brought to him and he cured them.

Q. Whither did St. Paul go after leaving Malta?

A. He went to Rome, where though kept a prisoner for two years, he was treated with kindness and courtesy, and permitted to preach, and instruct all who came to him.

Q. How many epistles are contained in the New Testament?

A. Twenty-one; fourteen of which were written by St. Paul; one by St. James; two by St. Peter; three by St. John; and one by St. Jude.

Q. Which were the epistles written by St. Paul?

A. One to the Romans; two to the Corinthians; one to the Galatians; one to the Ephesians; one to

the Philippians; one to the Colossians; two to the Thessalonians; two to Timothy; one to Titus; one to Philemon; and one to the Hebrews.

Q. Who were Timothy, Titus, and Philemon?

A. Timothy was bishop of Ephesus, Titus, bishop of Crete, and Philemon, a noble citizen of Colossia.

Q. Where and when did St. Paul write his epistle to the Romans?

A. At Corinth, about twenty-four years after our Lord's ascension, when he was preparing to go to Jerusalem with charitable contributions from the Christians in Greece to their suffering brethren in Judea.

Q. When did St. Paul write his epistles to the Corinthians?

A. About the same year in which he wrote his epistle to the Romans.

Q. Where and when did St. Paul write his epistle to the Galatians?

A. He wrote it in Ephesus, about twenty-three years after our Lord's ascension.

Q. When and where did St. Paul write his epistle to the Ephesians?

A. About twenty-nine years after our Lord's ascension, whilst he was a prisoner in Rome. About the same time he wrote his epistle to the Philippians, and also that to the Colossians.

Q. When did St. Paul write his epistles to the Thessalonians?

A. About nineteen years after our Lord's ascension, so that they were the earliest in point of time. He

wrote them on occasion of a persecution raised in Thessalonica by the unbelieving Jews.

Q. When did St. Paul write his epistles to Timothy and Titus?

A. About thirty-three years after our Lord's ascension; the second epistle to Timothy appears to have been written during St. Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

Q. When did he write his epistle to the Hebrews, or converted Jews?

A. About twenty-nine years after our Lord's ascension.

Q. When did St. James write his epistle, styled Catholic, or universal, on account of its being addressed to all the faithful in general?

A. About twenty-eight years after our Lord's ascension, a little before he suffered martyrdom.

Q. Which St. James wrote the epistle?

A. He that was called St. James the Less, a cousin of our Lord according to the flesh, and first bishop of Jerusalem.

Q. When did St. Peter write his first epistle, and to whom?

A. He wrote it in Rome about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension, to the faithful dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

Q. When did St. Peter write his second epistle?

A. About thirty-five years after our Lord's ascension, and a little before his martyrdom.

Q. When and to whom did St. John write his first epistle?

A. About sixty-six years after our Lord's ascension, to all the faithful, without exception.

Q. To whom did St. John write his second and third epistles?

A. The second he wrote to a pious lady named Electa, and her family, whom he instructs, warning them to avoid all communication with the teachers of false doctrines. The third, St. John wrote to a Christian named Gaius.

Q. When and to whom did St. Jude write his epistle?

A. The epistle of St. Jude appears to have been written when all the other apostles except St. John were dead. It was addressed to the faithful in general.

Q. When did St. John write the Apocalypse, or Book of Revelations?

A. About sixty-four years after our Lord's ascension, while the holy apostle, then far advanced in years, was exiled by order of the Roman emperor Domitian, to the island of Patmos.

Q. How did St. Peter end his life?

A. After preaching the Gospel in Italy, and other provinces of the West, he went to Rome, where he met St. Paul, and after laboring with him to extend and establish the faith in that city, he was crucified in the persecution raised by the wicked Emperor Nero.

Q. What have you to remark of St. Peter's glorious martyrdom?

A. Being condemned to die on the cross, through a

spirit of compunction and humility, he made it his request that he should be crucified with his head downwards, which was done accordingly, and such was the death cheerfully suffered by the Prince of the Apostles, the first Vicar of Christ on earth.

Q. How and when did St. Paul die ?

A. St. Paul gained the crown of martyrdom about the same time as his brother apostle, and fellow-laborer, St. Peter, but he being a Roman citizen, might not be crucified, and was, therefore, beheaded.

Q. How did St. Andrew, brother of St. Peter, end his life ?

A. He was crucified for the faith at Achaia in Greece, after preaching the Gospel in Scythia, and various countries of Greece.

Q. What have you to relate of St. James, called the Major, or Great ?

A. St. James the Major, who was a brother of St. John the Evangelist, is supposed after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, to have preached to the Jews dispersed amongst the Gentiles. He also preached the Gospel in Spain, of which country he is considered the apostle. He returned to Jerusalem, after ten years apostolic labor, and was beheaded by order of king Herod Agrippa. St. James was the first of the apostles who suffered martyrdom.

Q. What have you to relate of St. John, the Evangelist ?

A. St. John did not die a martyr to the faith like so many others of the apostles, although he was once

thrown into a caldron of boiling oil by order of the Emperor Domitian, but miraculously escaped unhurt.

Q. What became of him afterwards?

A. He was banished to the island of Patmos, where he wrote his Revelations, and returning thence after a year of exile found that St. Timothy, bishop of Ephesus had suffered martyrdom a little before; St. John then took charge of the Church of Ephesus, and died bishop of that city, at a very advanced age.

Q. What was the end of St. Philip?

A. After the descent of the Holy Ghost, St. Philip went to Phrygia, where he preached the Gospel, and died at an advanced age, at Hieropolis, in that country.

Q. What have you to tell of St. Bartholomew?

A. St. Bartholomew is supposed to have been identical with Nathaniel, a doctor of the law, who was brought to Christ by St. Philip, and chosen as an apostle by our Lord. St. Bartholomew preached the Gospel in the East, and especially in India. His apostolic labors were crowned by the grace of martyrdom, whilst preaching to some obstinate pagans in Armenia. Some historians say that St. Bartholomew was crucified, others that he was flayed alive.

Q. In what countries did St. Thomas preach the Gospel?

A. There was none of the apostles to whom a wider field of apostolic labor was given than to St. Thomas, surnamed Didymus. He first preached the Gospel in

Parthia, then in other parts of the East, in Media, Persia, and, it is said, also in India and Ethiopia.

Q. What was the manner of this apostle's death?

A. He suffered martyrdom, at Meliapor, on the Coromandel coast, where his body was found pierced with lances.

Q. What was the end of St. Mathew, the Apostle and Evangelist?

A. St. Mathew, is said to have suffered martyrdom in Parthia, after having preached the Gospel in Judea, and afterwards in various countries of the East.

Q. What have you to relate of St. James, called the Less, first bishop of Jerusalem?

A. St. James the Less was the sister's son of the Blessed Virgin. He was revered even by the Jews for the austere sanctity of his life, and for a long term of years governed the faithful of Jerusalem, though continually menaced with persecution. At length Ananias the high priest, took him to the top of a high tower, threatening him with death if he did not preach against the religion of Christ to the multitude assembled below.

Q. What did St. James do?

A. He gladly took the opportunity of preaching Christ crucified to the people, with his usual zeal and fervor, and was, therefore, cast from the top of the tower; he was not entirely killed by the fall, and raising himself on his knees, began to supplicate the Lord

for mercy on his persecutors, when the Jews stoned him to death.

Q. Who was St. Jude, surnamed Thaddeus, and what was his end?

A. St. Jude was the brother of St. James the Less, and like him, therefore, a nephew of our blessed Lady. He preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Syria, and Idumea. St. Jude suffered martyrdom in Armenia, though some historians say, in Persia. He is said to have been shot to death with arrows, some say whilst fastened to a cross.

Q. What is related of St. Simon, surnamed Zelotes, or the Zealot, on account of his great zeal?

A. He is said to have preached the faith in Egypt, and other countries of Africa, and subsequently in the East, where he is supposed to have died on a cross, in Suanir, a city of Persia.

Q. What was the life and death of the apostle St. Mathias, the successor of Judas Iscariot?

A. St. Mathias was remarkable for his mortified and austere life. He preached the faith in Cappadocia, and along the shores of the Caspian Sea, and received the crown of martyrdom at Colchis.

Q. What is related of St. Mark, the Evangelist?

A. St. Mark was a disciple of St. Peter, by whom he was appointed to the see of Alexandria, in Egypt, where he made numerous converts, but had to fly on two occasions from the fury of the pagans. On the pagan feast of the Egyptian idol Serapis, they dragged

the holy bishop and Evangelist from the altar where he had been offering up the Holy Sacrifice, and cast him into prison.

Q. What was the manner of St. Mark's death?

A. On the following day, his persecutors dragged him along the streets till his blood and fragments of his mangled flesh strewed the way; yet in the midst of his torments he never ceased praising and thanking God, and so gave up his blessed spirit.

Q. Who was St. Luke, the Evangelist?

A. St. Luke was a native of Antioch, was well instructed in the learning of those times, and had been a physician by profession. He also excelled in painting, and is said to have painted portraits of our Lord and his blessed Mother. St. Luke accompanied St. Paul in many of his journeys and visitations, and was much beloved by that great apostle.

Q. How and when did St. Luke die?

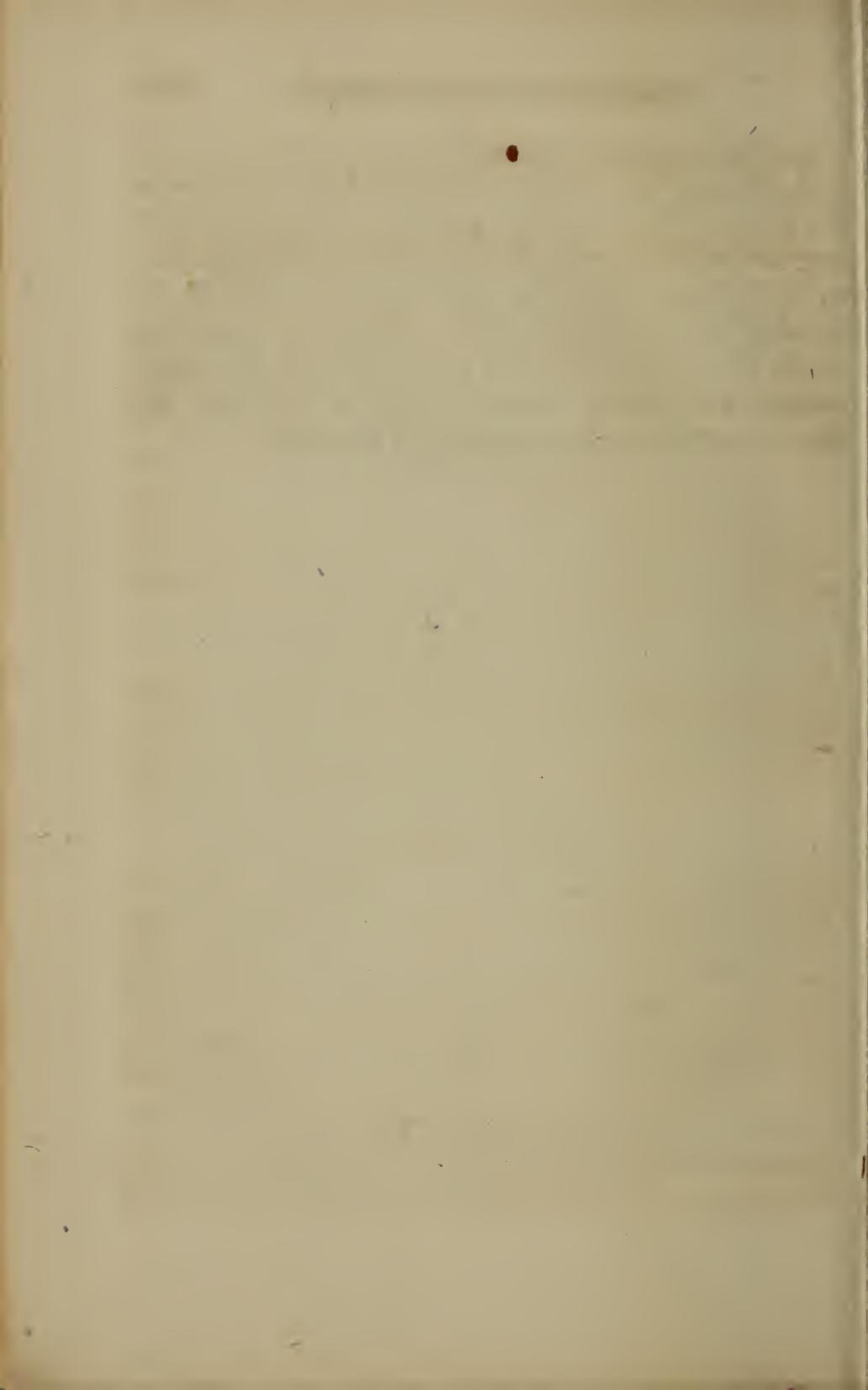
A. He died at an advanced age, according to some historians peacefully and naturally, but others say that he suffered martyrdom. It is certain, that whatever might have been the manner of his death, St. Luke endured many sufferings for the faith.

Q. What have you to observe of the Apostles and Evangelists generally?

A. That they all suffered persecution for the faith and that most of them, like their divine Master, died ignominiously and in torment.

Q. What do you infer from that?

A. That as the Church was founded in blood, even the blood of Christ and his apostles, and as persecution was the lot of her divine Founder and his first apostles, so has it been ever since the lot of the Church he founded on the rock of Peter; that Church against which he promised that the gates of hell should never prevail, and that he himself would be with her all days, even to the consummation of the world.



CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF SACRED HISTORY.

FIRST EPOCH.

| | B. C. |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Creation of the World..... | 4004 |
| Death of Abel..... | 3876 |
| Adam died..... | 3074 |
| Enoch taken up to Heaven..... | 3017 |
| Seth died..... | 2962 |
| Enos died..... | 2864 |
| Mathusalem died..... | 2348 |

SECOND EPOCH.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Universal Deluge..... | 2348 |
| Building of the Tower of Babel..... | 2247 |
| Death of Noah..... | 1998 |
| Birth of Abraham..... | 1996 |

THIRD EPOCH.

| | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Call of Abraham..... | 1921 |
| Sodom destroyed..... | 1897 |
| Birth of Isaac..... | 1896 |
| Birth of Jacob..... | 1836 |
| Joseph sold by his Brethren..... | 1729 |
| Jacob goes to Egypt..... | 1706 |
| Birth of Moses..... | 1571 |

FOURTH EPOCH.

| | |
|---|------|
| Deliverance of the Jews from Egypt..... | 1491 |
| The Law given on Mount Sinai..... | 1491 |

| | B. C. |
|---|-------|
| Josue leads the Israelites across the Jordan..... | 1451 |
| Gideon appointed Judge..... | 1243 |
| Jephta judge..... | 1187 |
| Death of Samson..... | 1117 |
| Death of Heli..... | 1116 |
| Samuel appointed Judge..... | 1116 |
| Saul made King..... | 1095 |
| David " | 1054 |
| Solomon " | 1015 |

FIFTH EPOCH.

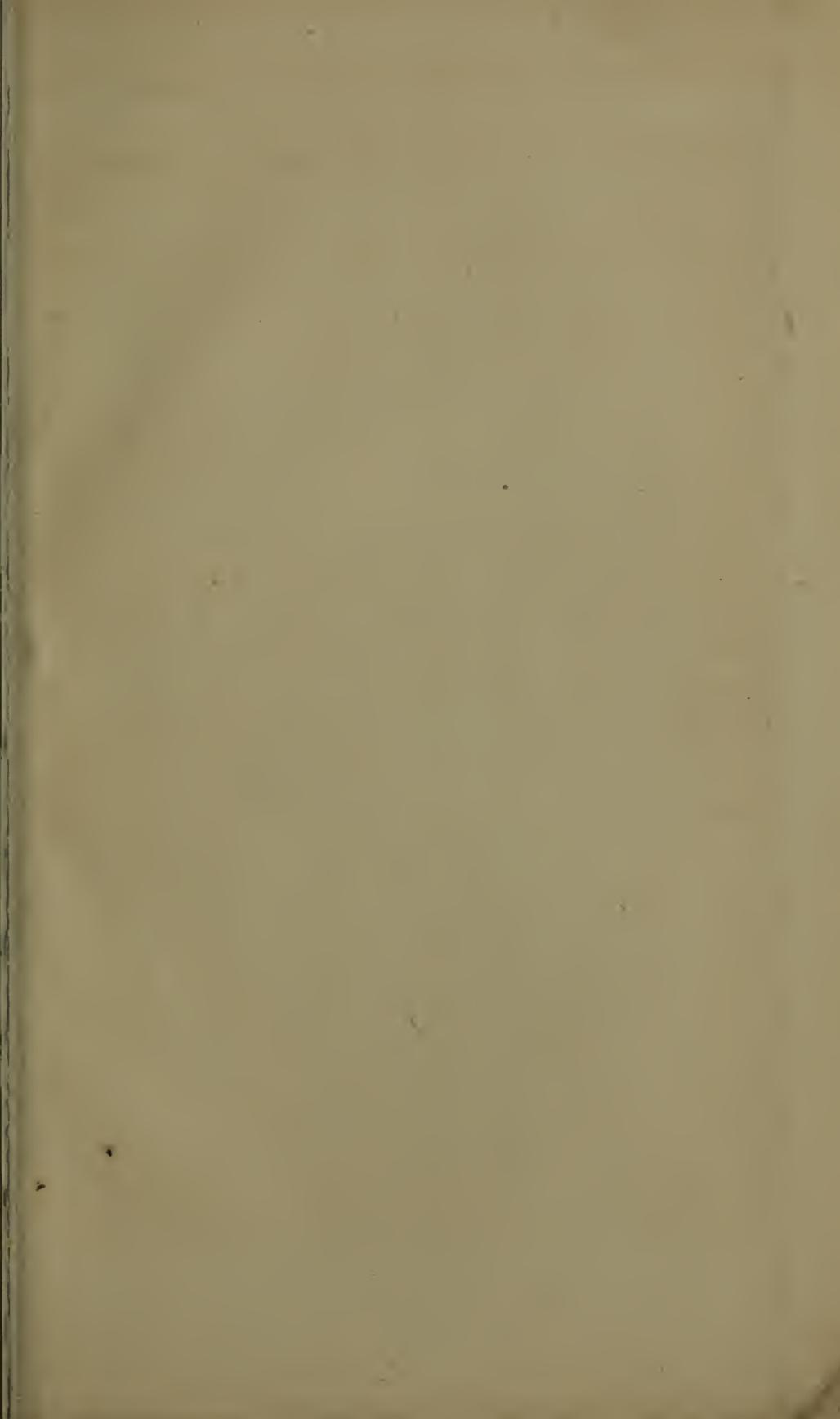
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|--|------|
| Dedication of Solomon's Temple..... | 1005 |
| Roboam King..... | 980 |
| Revolt of the Ten Tribes under Jeroboam..... | 980 |

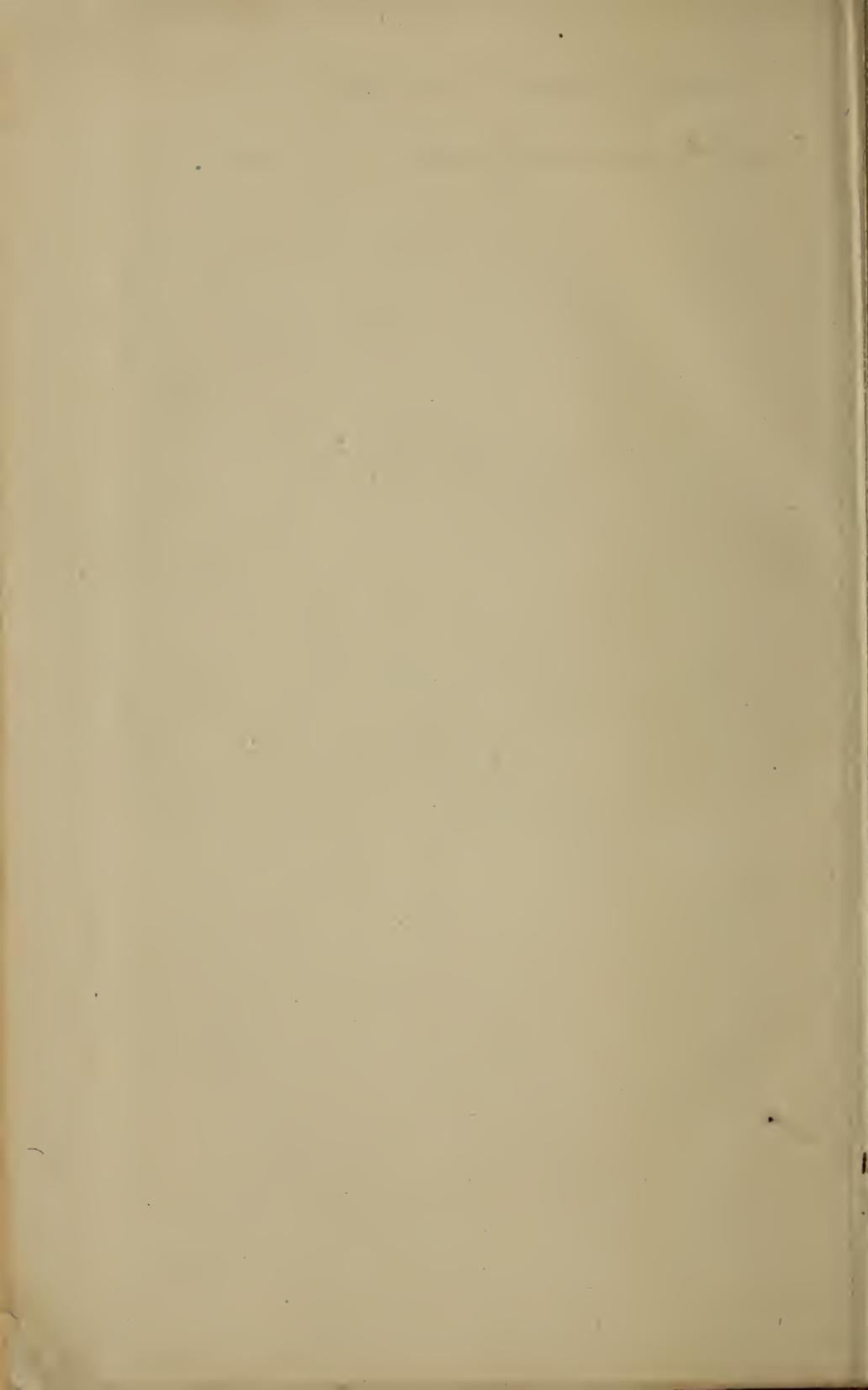
| | B. C. | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-----|---------------|----------------|
| Abia, | King of Juda | 963 | | |
| Asa, | " " | 960 | Nadab, | king of Israel |
| | | | Baasa, | " " |
| | | | Ela, | " " |
| | | | Zamri, | " " |
| | | | Amri, | " " |
| Josaphat, | " " | 919 | Achab, | " " |
| | | | Ochosias, | " " |
| Joram, | " " | 896 | Joram | " " |
| Ochosias, | " " | 890 | | |
| Athalia, Queen of Juda | | 889 | Jehu, | " " |
| Joas, King of Juda | | 883 | Joachas, | " " |
| Amazias, | " " | 845 | Joas, | " " |
| Interregnum from..... | | 816 | Jeroboam II., | " " |
| Osias, King of Juda | | 806 | Zacharias, | " " |
| | | | Sellum, | " " |
| | | | Manahem, | " " |
| | | | Phaceia, | " " |

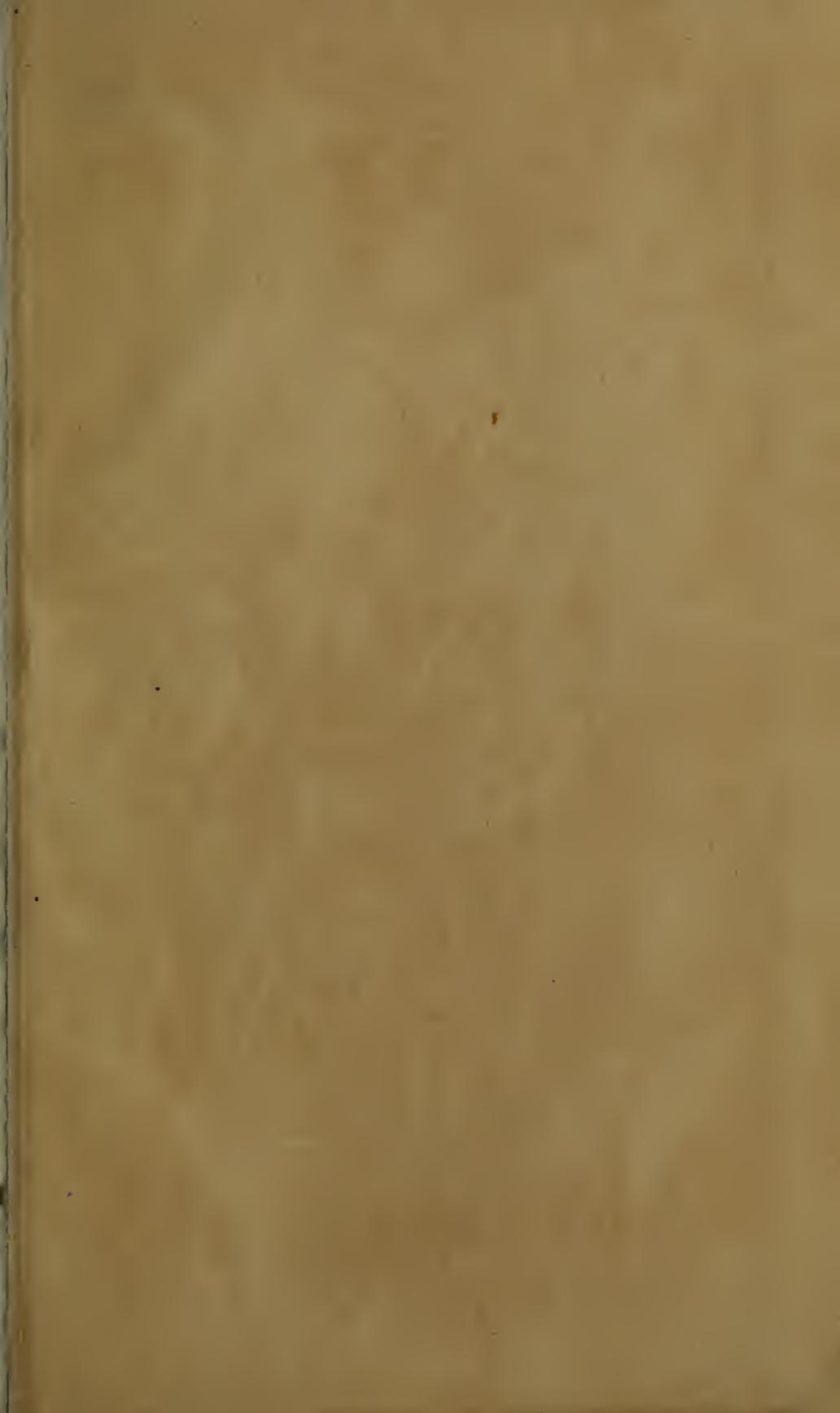
| | B. C. | | B. C. |
|---|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Joatham, King of Juda | 754 | Phacee, " " | 755 |
| Achaz, " " | 739 | Osee, " " | 727 |
| | | Downfall of the Kingdom | |
| Echezias, " " | 724 | of Israel..... | 718 |
| Manasses reigned in Juda..... | | | 699 |
| Amon..... | | | 641 |
| Josias..... | | | 640 |
| Joachas..... | | | 610 |
| Joachim..... | | | 608 |
| Babylonian Captivity..... | | | 608 |
| Jechonias, King of Juda..... | | | 599 |
| Sedecias, " "..... | | | 598 |
| End of the Kingdom of Juda..... | | | 587 |
| End of the Babylonian Captivity..... | | | 533 |
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| Commencement of the Prophet Daniel's seventy weeks... | | | 454 |
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| Simon..... | | | 144 |
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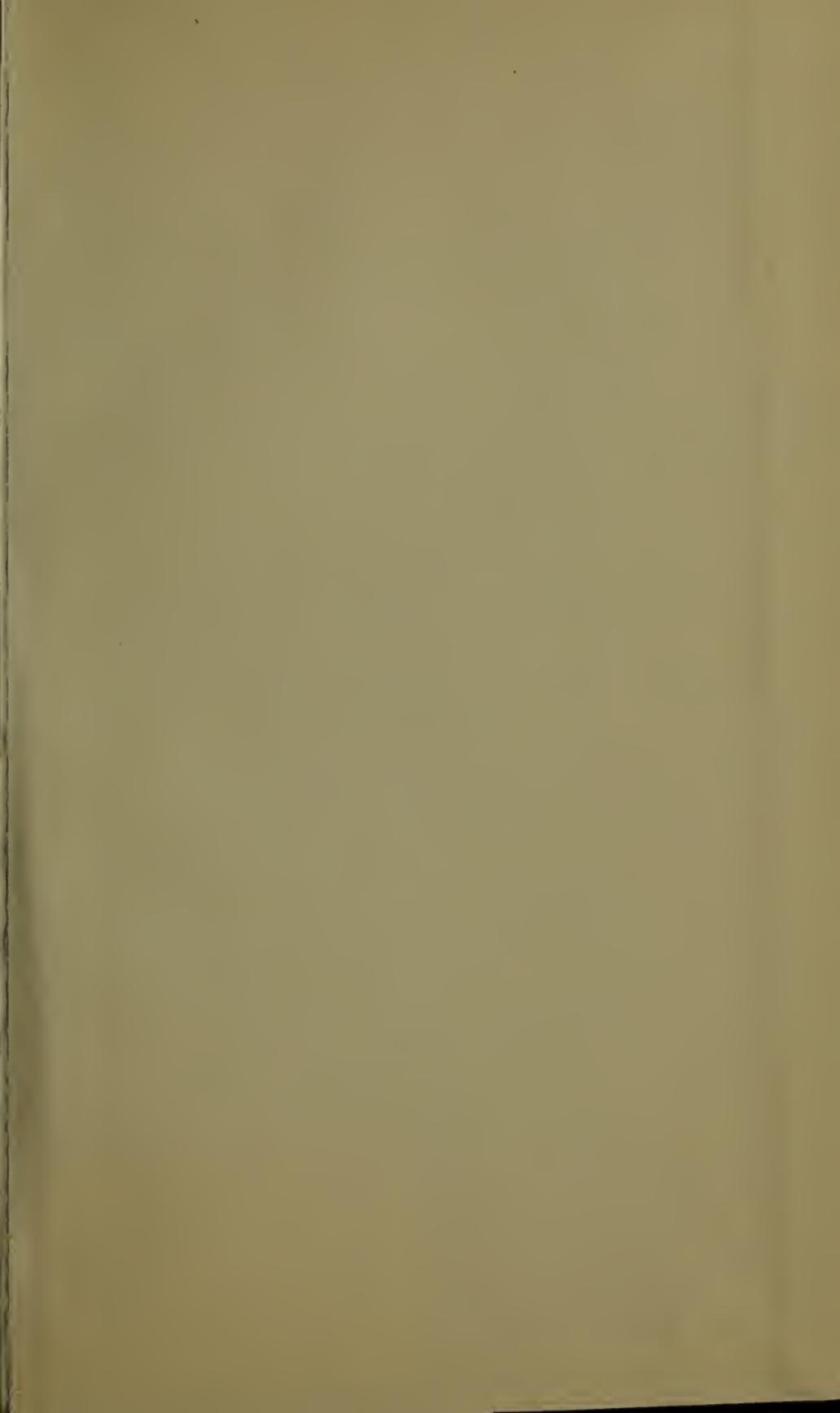
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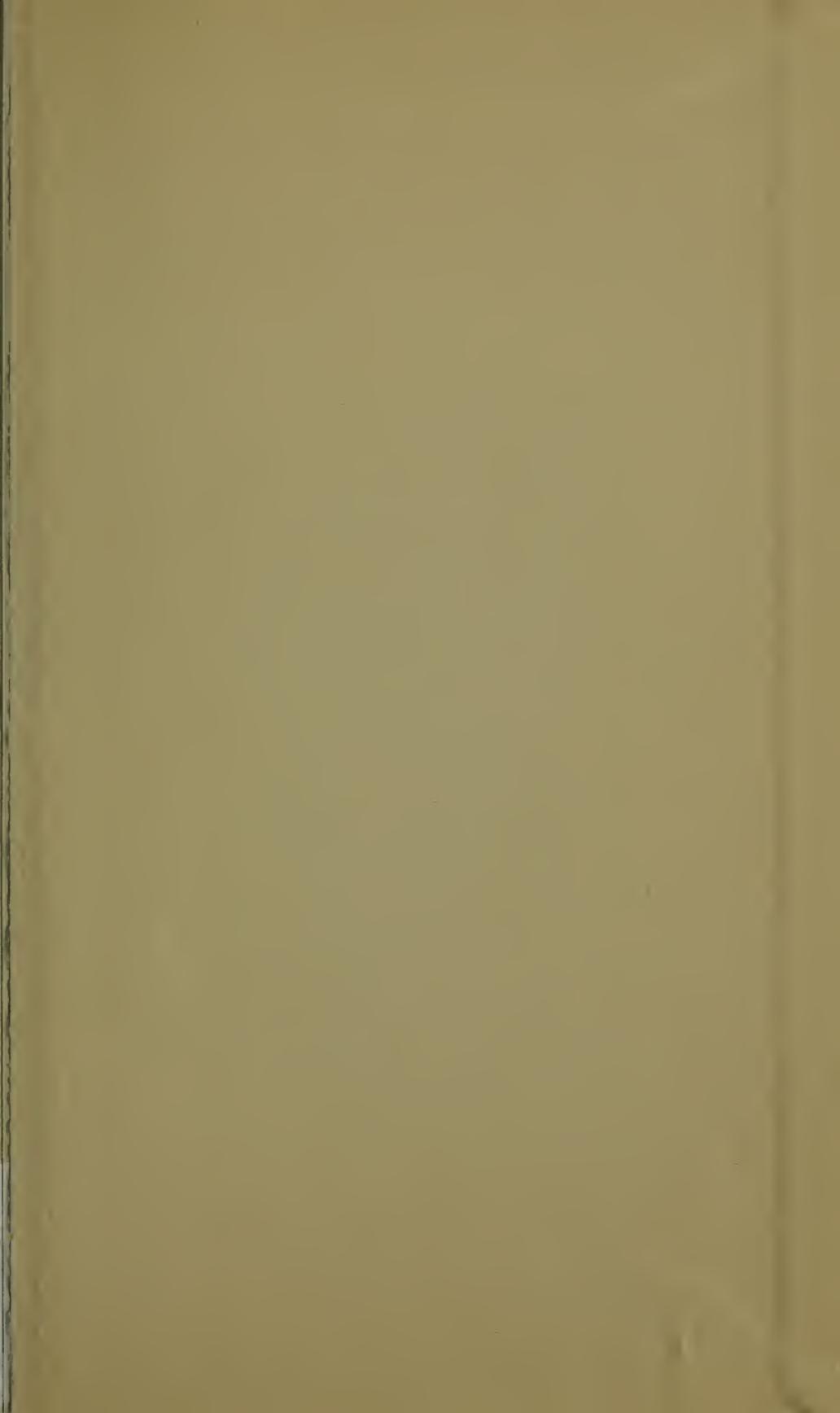


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