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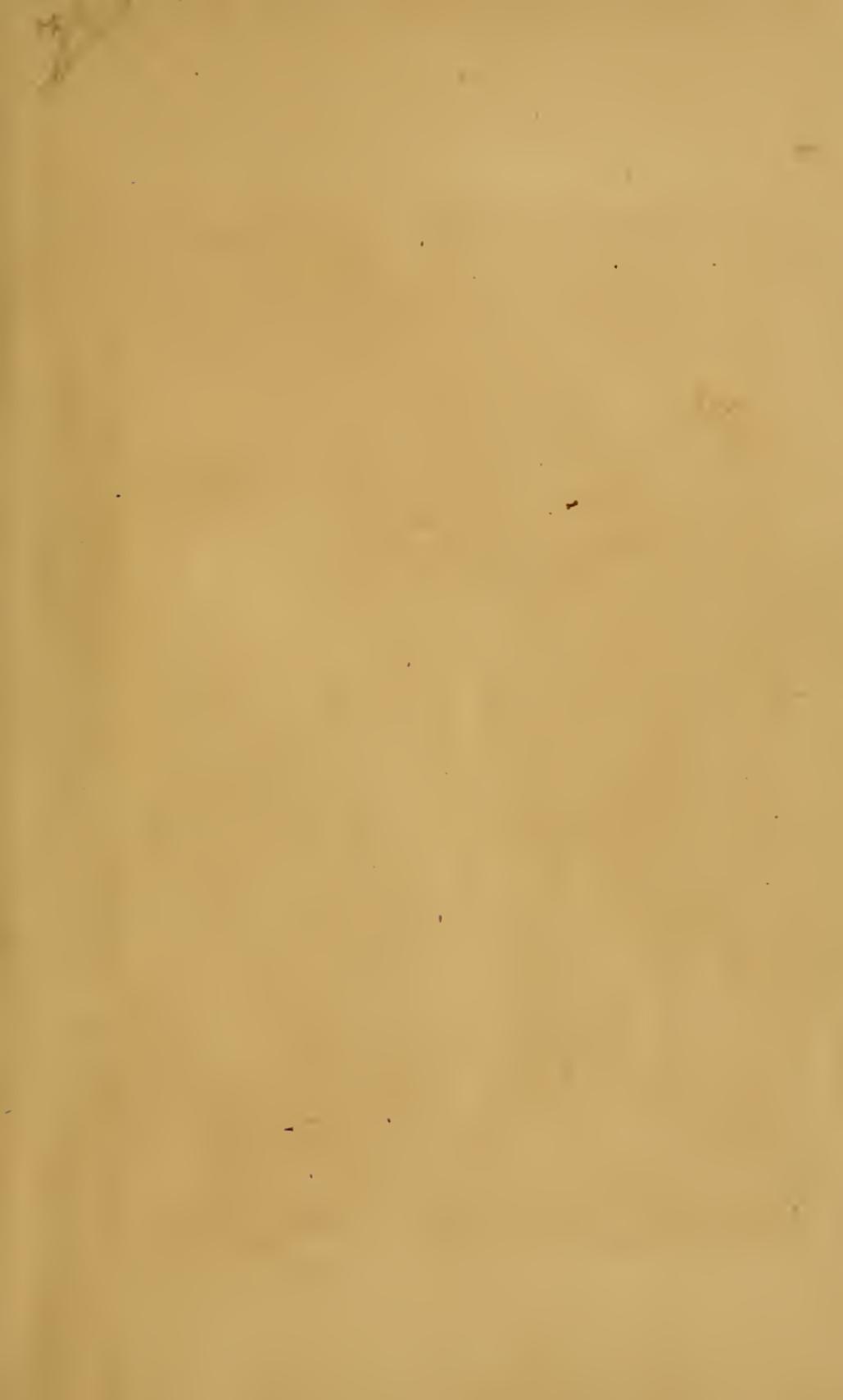
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Daniel in the Lions den:

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PROPHETIC STUDIES;

OR,

LECTURES

ON

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

BY

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“ We have also a more sure word of prophecy ; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.”—2 *Pet.* i. 19.

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PREFACE.

IN these Lectures on Daniel the prophet, there will be found scarcely a single discovery or application of prophetic symbol which is not already familiar to all students of prophecy. They were not prepared for the learned: they are addressed to the multitude. I have paid some attention to the critical investigation of this ancient and instructive prophecy; I have studied more or less closely the varied and interesting exegeses of many learned and laborious critics, and from these I have derived much information; but in these pages I do not attempt to present an analysis of such labours, or to enunciate the component elements of the conclusions I have formed, and herein expressed. I find it takes all my strength, as well as all I have learned and read, to enable me to make my meaning plain. I am satisfied in these Studies to appeal to, and interest and instruct the masses. One may appreciate the honour of speaking to scholars, but feel still more the duty of addressing mankind. I rejoice at witnessing the loftiest forms so splendidly occupied as they now are. I pray they may be covered with yet greater and more illustrious scholarship. I am

content to stand below, and learning daily, as I do from the master spirits above me, to spread far and wide what I have gathered, in the most intelligible and acceptable words, among the "thousands of Israel."* I have invariably tried to bring out, not only the doctrinal, but the practical and comforting truths which are more or less latent in the sublime and mysterious predictions and symbols of the future. I have not, I trust, forgotten individual responsibility and requirement in my endeavours to trace out the course of the Church, the fall of dynasties, and the revolutions of empires, as they are delineated on the prophetic chart, and by no means obscurely predicted by the spirit of prophecy.

In this, as in every portion of the word of God, there are proclaimed grand saving truths. Amid the foliage of prophecy—amid the flowers of poetry—in the details of biography, and in the long annals of national or universal history, truths profitable or refreshing or sanctifying to the soul flash forth continually. God in Providence never omits to feed the minutest insect in his provision for the greatest and the most important of created intelligences. In his Word there is living bread for the soul of the humblest, as well as warning and instruction and reproof for kings and nations. In the pages of the Prophets, as truly, if not as fully as in the pages of the Evangelists, such truths

* The critical disquisitions of Hengstenberg, the eloquent and philosophical investigations of Birks—not to speak of Mede, Wintle, and the two Newtons—are truly valuable. Stuart, as usual on prophetic subjects, is not to be trusted.

as the following are written: "Sin has entered, and death by sin." The world was not made as we find it; it has undergone some dread and terrible disaster. Ask the philosopher to explain this, and he is dumb! Ask nature herself, through any of her oracles, and she, too, is dumb! Her groans, that have not ceased since the creation, are the only replies to your question. But, consult the Scriptures, inquire at them, What is at fault? Their reply is, Sin has entered, and death by sin? The earth was created holy and beautiful. God pronounced it good. Man's sin has unhinged it. Every flower was once fragrance; every sound was once harmony; every sight was beauty; but sin has fallen upon the earth, like a drop of ink on the sensitive blotting-paper, encircling with its poisonous influence the widest sphere, until the whole earth is tainted—stricken, as it were, with paralysis, groaning, in travail, waiting for redemption. The intellect is darkened by the exhalations arising from the swamps of sin. The truth is not seen in its beauty; not because it is dimly enunciated, but because the eye of him who looks upon it has become dim. The conscience also has become depraved, diseased, polluted. What a change has passed upon that faculty which was once the echo of the voice of God—the bright daguerreotype reflection of his own holy image! It too labours, as if anxious to be emancipated—to regain its lost sovereignty, and govern once more the heart and the affections of the soul.

Not only is the conscience and heart of man diseased, but out of that heart in which God once dwelt,—once the holy chancel, as it were, of created being,—proceed adultery, murders, thefts, and all uncleanness. The gold has become dim, the fine gold has changed, man is altogether degenerate; and this change, this dread affliction, is not individual, peculiar, limited, but universal; there is no spot upon the earth it has not reached—no climate where it is not felt. It has entered the hut of the Indian, the cave of the Greenlander, the cabin of the semi-savage Irishman, the cottage of the peasant, and the palace of the king; its voice mingles with the debates of parliament, congress, and divan. It colours all circumstances; it is seen in the flames of hamlets, and heard in the roar of revolution; it rides on the storm. 1848 was an incidental testimony of what sin is; all history shows it has made Golgotha and Acel-dama but too plainly the types of earth and humanity.

Man has sinned, and therefore he suffers. The Bible also testifies of the curse brought upon us in consequence of sin. The instant man sinned, Jesus stood between the living and the dead—modified and stayed the full rush of the terrible curse which sin had brought on; but the time does come, and the place will be, when that curse created by sin shall descend in all its pressure on some, and wither down to the very roots all happiness and peace, close every spring of joy, and open up at every point of the circumference

of their existence, streams of misery immense, ceaseless.

We have not only sinned and suffered, but we cannot help ourselves out of it. We are not only without holiness, but without strength; no man can recover himself. All the popes, bishops, prelates, or councils in Christendom, can no more change the heart of man, than they can create a fixed star, or soar to the sun. I will believe they can do it, when they will stand upon the grave of another Lazarus, and say, Come forth; and when Lazarus, the dead, in obedience to such command, shall come forth, and take his place among the living. What is the history of the world without God but a history of successive efforts and successive failures to regenerate itself? What is Pantheism, but man's vain effort to regenerate man? What are Popery, and Puseyism, but priestly and abortive efforts to regenerate man? What is Christianity, but God's historical and never-failing success in the regeneration of man?

It is wrong for infidels to quote Aristides, Socrates, Plato, Alfred, and subsequent names, and say these are types of humanity; they are not so. They are the exceptions to the general condition of man; they are as tall trees seen from the distance, which appear a beautiful forest in the horizon; but when we approach nearer, we find, here and there, beneath and around them, the pestilential swamp, the deadly Upas-tree, all manner of vile and worthless things. This is one of those sights in which "distance" may be said

to "lend enchantment to the view," covering, with an apparently beautiful exterior, as seen from afar, the terrible corruption which lies and festers below.

If we desire to see what man is, let us shut our ears to the harp of the poet, and visit the Mahomedan wife, the Indian maid, the Hindoo widow; let us leave the romantic picture of mankind, and explore the lanes and alleys of London; let us inspect our prisons and penal settlements, Bridewell and Botany Bay. After we have gone the round of these places, let us go home and read the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and see if there is one exaggerating touch! That chapter is a terrible but true picture of the lower strata of humanity. What were the deities in heathen times? Jupiter was a monster, Mercury a thief, Mars a sort of cannibal, who drank the blood of his victims. Such were the gods of the heathen; and, like gods like people. But of man's corruption we have awful instances in modern times. Men, baptised in the name of Christ, professing his religion, and under his pretended sanction, have set up Inquisitions for the murder of saints, for the plunder of widows, and then they have built cathedrals with the produce. This Gospel, itself pure, precious, and indicative of its Divine origin, has been perverted and made the patrons of the buildings, under whose splendid towers are dungeons deep and dismal. So intense is man's depravity, that not only will he worship Jupiter, Mercury, and Mars, but he will take the

very stones God has selected and shaped for a temple to himself, and with these construct a temple vocal with men's praise, and in which wickedness shall be consecrated.

The Gospel tells us that Jesus who knew no sin, was made sin for us: in these words is the very substance of our sermons; without these they would be but as sounding brass, and tinkling cymbals. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." He *gave*, not *permitted*, and the great Redeemer left the admiration of angels for the execration of the mob: he exchanged a diadem of glory for a wreath of thorns; he left the robes of majesty and beauty for that vile rag that Pilate cast upon his shoulders. Why? It was for us! that souls ruined by the curse might be redeemed by his blood, and restored to that great home he is gone to prepare for us.

The Bible is not a mere directory, nor the pulpit a mere teacher's desk. Christianity is not a rule, but a prescription; not merely a direction to the living and healthy, but a cure for the diseased, life for the dead: and Calvary is not a composite of Sinai, but that spot on which God in human nature died; looking to whom, and leaning upon whom, I am the possessor of justifying righteousness. He who knew no sin, was made sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him.

On him were laid the iniquities of us all; we

bear his righteousness, and therefore by him alone do we recover every lost blessing. He did nothing worthy of death, although he died; and we shall have done nothing worthy of life when we hear the glad words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." When Jesus died, he had done nothing to deserve it; when we are admitted to glory, it will be wholly without merit on our part. He was the spotless lamb—we are the poor stray sheep, clothed in his spotless righteousness.

There is another great truth to which the Bible bears testimony—the regeneration of the heart by the Holy Spirit. Regeneration is no more by baptism than justification is by works: justification is our title, sanctification is our qualification; justification is our franchise, sanctification is our fitness. This justification is by Christ's work alone. This regeneration is the Holy Spirit's work alone. The precious Catechism of that Church to which I belong, and in which I have been schooled from my infancy, says justification is an *act* of God's grace, and sanctification is a *work* of God's Spirit; one is an act done once for all, completely, perfectly, and for ever—the other a work begun, carried on, until at length we are made fit for heaven, and are removed to glory.

The Bible insists on all who have themselves felt the truth,—not ministers alone, but all who have received the Gospel,—doing their utmost to make it known to those who yet remain in ignorance. Psalm lxxvii.: "God be merciful unto

us, and bless us." Why? "That thy way may be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations." A man who can pray thus, and then pass the plate at a missionary collection; contented, it may be, with giving nothing, or, what is worse, a trifle, does not know what the Gospel is, or what Christianity really means. True, God can promote the Gospel without our instrumentality; but it concerns us to ascertain not what God can do, but what he does—God's omnipotence is not our rule of faith. We know of, and he tells us of no other means. The sunbeams do not write salvation on the sky; angel voices do not chant it; the temple of nature tells us there is a God, but it tells not our relation to him. "How shall they believe if they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Take the microscopic view of the City Missionary, and inspect the lanes and alleys of wretchedness, sin, and demoralisation at home; and then with the telescope sweep the broad horizon of the world from mountain top to mountain top. Behold so many of the people of Europe lying in darkness; look on Asia, once the cradle of Christianity, now the battle-field of the Moslem and the Jew; see Africa steeped in barbarism, bleeding, mangled, and imploring your interposition. And when you have gazed on these heart-rending spectacles—spectacles that look to us so shadowy because our inner vision is so dark—hear the Son of God: first from the *cross*, and next from the *throne*, saying, "Go teach all nations."

When the Gospel has been preached as a witness to all, then shall Messiah come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and the end shall come—the end of our disputes, quarrels, pride, sectarianism, selfishness, vain-glory; the end of despotism on the part of the rulers, and of insubordination in the subjects; the end of the toils of slavery, and the sufferings of martyrdom; the end of Popery, Puseyism, Paganism, and Mahomedanism,—the Missal, the Breviary, the Shaster, and the Koran. That great rainbow of the covenant, that starts from the cross, vaults into the sky, and sweeps over the throne, shall complete its orbit, and rest again upon the ground, and Christ and Christianity shall be all and in all. Then shall the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. Then the tree of life shall be where the cypress is. Then shall nations sing God's praise, and Sion recount God's marvels. Then shall history retrace with new joy God's footprints. Then shall the glory of Jesus sparkle in the dewdrop, and in the boundless sea; in the minutest atom, and in the greatest star; and this earth, restrung, retuned, shall be one grand Æolian harp, swept by the breath of the Holy Spirit, pouring forth those melodies which began on Calvary, and shall sound through all generations.

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PROPHETIC STUDIES ;

OR,

LECTURES ON DANIEL THE PROPHET.

LECTURE I.

DANIEL THE PROPHET.

I READ the first chapter of Daniel in the course of our morning reading of the Scripture this day, and I then stated that I would turn your attention in the evening to some of those studies in this interesting and instructive book, which it is impossible to set forth in the course of a few cursory remarks upon the lessons which we usually read.

I may premise that Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, the Duke of Manchester, Faber, Birks, and others—men of distinguished erudition and thorough piety—have devoted some of the best of their time to the elucidation of this book, and all without exception have testified to its excellence, its instructiveness, its value as a clue to the knowledge of the things that are passing in the history of this dispensation, and of the principles on which God governs the world. Sir Isaac Newton, who explored the firmament with unwearied wing, and made an apocalypse of the stars, felt that he was sounding a greater depth, and rising to a loftier height, when he sat down a patient student of this book to ascertain the mind, and make plain to less gifted souls the meaning of the Spirit of God. Bishop Newton, a divine of consummate piety,

laborious research, and great talent, makes the following remark on this book:—"What an amazing prophecy is that of Daniel! comprehending so many events, and extending through so many successive ages, from the establishment of the Persian empire, upwards of 500 years before Christ, to the second general resurrection at the last day. What a proof of Divine Providence and of Divine Revelation!—for who could thus declare the things that shall be, with their times and their seasons, but He only who hath them in his power—whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and whose kingdom endureth from generation to generation?" It is a remarkable feature in the prophecies of Daniel, that they deal much with figures. There is in them, if I may use the expression, less of poetry, more of chronology. There is no prophecy so definite; no prophecy that so much lays itself open to disproof, if it be false, or to proof if it be, as we believe it to be, true. There is no prophecy which the Jew has felt greater difficulty in dealing with. For the modern Jew sees so plainly, that if Daniel be inspired, and his chronology be of God, the Messiah must have come, and that it is in vain to look for another, that the more earnest Jew meets the difficulty boldly by denying that the book is divine altogether, on grounds and upon premises on which he may deny that there is any divinity in the Old Testament at all, from the Book of Genesis to the last verse of the Prophet Malachi.

There is scarcely a doubt that Daniel is the author of the book. It does not begin with an express assertion of the fact, but throughout the work the most casual reader can hardly fail to perceive many marks by which it is plain that Daniel himself was the writer. For instance, in chap. vii. 28, he says, "I, Daniel;" viii. 2, "A vision appeared to me, Daniel." All which, and I might quote other similar expressions, clearly prove that Daniel is the writer of the book.

But the next question that arises is this: Is there evidence that Daniel not only existed, but was the singularly favoured, excellent, and beautiful character that

he is here represented—not proclaimed to be, by words, but shown to be by implication? We think there is: for instance, in Ezek. xiv. 14, “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.” We have another allusion, almost the same, contained in Ezek. xxviii. 3: “Thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee.” And I may state that Ezekiel was cotemporary with Daniel. Ezekiel was the old and experienced saint, when Daniel was the young and growing, but highly-favoured Christian; and the beautiful allusion made by the elder to the wisdom and the excellence of the younger, were it not inspired, would lead us at least to say, How free from envy and jealousy was the aged Ezekiel as he waned from the stage, in reference to Daniel, who was about to fill his place, and was throwing him into the shade by his greater lustre and glory!

This book was received as authentic by the Jews prior to the time of our Saviour, and was never disputed by them. It is plain evidence that it existed in the Hebrew Bible—that it was translated by the Alexandrian Jews, three hundred years before the birth of Christ, into Greek, and accordingly it exists in the Septuagint translation at this day.

I may also observe that the Book of Daniel, as also the Book of Ezra, is written partly in the Chaldee, a language differing from the Hebrew in its form and structure, but not much more than Italian or Spanish differs from Latin. Any one who understands Latin may easily master either of the two former languages; and any one who understands Hebrew has the key that unlocks all the cognate Oriental languages. This language begins at chap. ii. 4, where the Chaldeans, who spoke Arameian, or Chaldee, say to the king in “Syriac,” which is the same dialect, and which was spoken by our Lord and by the Jews of his day, “O king, live for ever!” Josephus, the distinguished Jewish historian, bears testimony to the authenticity of this book in the following terms: “All these things did this man leave

behind him, writing as God had showed them to him ; so that those who read his prophecies, and see how they have been fulfilled, must be astonished at the honour conferred by God on Daniel." *Antiq.* x. 11. This is the testimony of a Jew who was bitterly hostile to Christianity ; and Josephus, in his *Antiquities*, shows how each prediction of Daniel had been fulfilled with reference to all the four great monarchies except the last, which was existing in his own time. But why this exception ? Because Josephus was a servant of the Roman emperor, and he had not the courage to proclaim that Daniel's prophecies regarding Rome had been as truly fulfilled as his prophecies relating to Babylon, or to the Persian or Median empire.

In the next place, our Lord and his Apostles expressly refer to Daniel. You are all acquainted with one allusion to him in Matt. xxiv. 15 : "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand)." But it is perhaps no less interesting to observe the allusions scattered through the New Testament, which clearly point to expressions and prophecies contained in Daniel, though the prophet himself is not expressly named. Thus, for instance, in 1 Pet. i. 10, we read, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." Now, on looking to Dan. ix. 3, and xii. 8, we find the passages to which St. Peter refers, in the former of which we read, "And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him," &c. ; and in the latter we read, "I heard, but I understood not ; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things ?" &c. Recollect these passages ; and while you recollect them, let the light struck from the language of Peter fall upon them, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of

Christ and the glory that should follow." Another very plain allusion to Daniel is contained in 2 Thess. ii. 3, where we have the delineation of the features of the man of sin, which may well be compared with what Daniel tells us of the "little horn" that was to arise "doing great things;" and you will see that Paul in this is but the echo of Daniel; that Paul in short fills up the outline which Daniel had previously sketched. Another passage to which I may refer, is 1 Cor. vi. 2, where the Apostle Paul says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" Why did the Apostle thus appeal to them? because the Prophet Daniel expressly declares that they will do so, when he tells us in chap. vii. 22, "Until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." What a wonderful harmony is there running through the whole word of God! You cannot touch, as it were, a note in Daniel, but all the Apostles of the New Testament respond to it. You may have noticed sometimes in a building, in a church, or a hall, that if a certain note or tone be given by the speaker, the whole building will instantly vibrate in harmony or in unison. In the same way, you cannot touch a truth in Daniel, but tones of harmony will burst from the lips of Paul and from the writings of Peter; the whole Bible, in grand harmony, revealing the mind, the will, and the glory of God.

We find another allusion—the last I shall here refer to—in Heb. xi. 33: "By faith they stopped the mouths of lions." This evidently refers to the wonderful deliverance of Daniel, recorded in this book, when cast into the den of lions by order of King Darius; upon which we shall comment on a future Sabbath evening. "Quenched the violence of fire." To what can this relate but to the escape of the three youths, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who were thrown into the fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar, and had not even their garments singed by the flame?

These allusions, scattered through the whole New Testament, show us that our Lord himself, Peter, Paul, and, I might say, all the Apostles, assumed the Book of

Daniel to be an inspired revelation of the mind and will of the Holy Spirit of God.

I have thus, then, I think, shown you enough from the remainder of the Bible to prove that this book is of the Bible. Some Christians amongst you, who long perhaps for better things, and sweeter things, and higher things, will be ready to say, "Why prove to us this of which we are already convinced?" So you are; but there are many young men in every congregation who are placed among nests of infidels, and who will be taunted, and jeered, and scoffed at, for assuming or asserting the truth, that the visions and the predictions of Daniel are inspired: I ask, then, Is it not useful,—is it not demanded by the exigencies of the age,—is it not Scriptural, to endeavour to enable every man to give a reason for the faith that is in him? I know you may be convinced in your hearts,—and nothing is so convincing that the Bible is true as the constant waiting upon a minister who makes known the precious Gospel: but you need, not only what will convince your own hearts that the Bible is from God, but you need that which will enable you to convince others also. It is most important to have money in your bank; but you will lose many an advantage by the want of a little change in your pocket. It is most important to have deep convictions in your soul; but it is not less valuable, in this strange world, and amid its strange mixture of society, to have a little ready argument which you can employ, and therewith answer a fool according to his folly.

Let me notice also another line of thought, which tends to convince us that Daniel wrote at the time that is here assumed, and was a living participator in the events which he records. For instance, it is stated in this very chapter, that the youths were fed from the royal table. This is received by the ordinary reader as a naked fact, but it is singularly corroborative of what we have been saying; for it was a custom peculiar to the Chaldeans and the Persians, and common to no people besides; and the quiet way in which it is here alluded

to as a common and a well-known fact, is presumptive evidence that the record was made by an individual who himself lived at the period and among the nation with whom such a custom prevailed.

The change of the names of his companions from Hebrew into Chaldee, is not merely a fact that accidentally occurred in this particular case, but was in accordance with a custom universally prevalent among the Chaldees. We have an allusion to something of the same kind in 2 Kings xxiv. 17, where it is said that the King of Babylon changed the name of Eliakim into Jehoiakim. This, again, shows that what is recorded in this book is in harmony with the age and the country in which it purports to have been penned.

The method of reckoning years is evidently Babylonish. Thus, in chap. ii. he says, "In the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar;" whence it is plain that the writer of it wrote then, and in that kingdom. You will find at once, from the way in which any person writes or speaks of longitude, in what country he has lived; because each country reckons longitude from its own meridian. Our meridian is a line supposed to pass through Greenwich, and therefore an English writer would reckon longitude from this point; while a Frenchman would speak of longitude as calculated from the meridian of Paris; and a foreigner of some other country would reckon it from another and a different first meridian. Thus, as the mode of reckoning longitude would show the country to which the writer belonged, so the allusion here contained to the mode of reckoning time, shows that the narrative comes from the pen of one who was well acquainted with the habits and customs of the people concerning whom he wrote.

Another proof of this fact may be found in chap. ii. 5, where the king commands the houses of the wise men to be "made a dunghill." It would be difficult to understand this of houses built of stone or of our brick; but we must remember that the houses of the Chaldeans were made of bricks of clay hardened in the sun, which might easily be dissolved by violent rains, and which

would speedily, by the continued action of the rain and moisture, be reduced to a pulp, or soft mass.

We have further evidence of Daniel's veracity and authenticity, in the modes in which capital punishment is recorded to have been inflicted. Casting into a heated furnace was a cruelty practised only by the Chaldeans; while casting into a den of wild beasts was a punishment peculiar to the Medes and Persians. You will therefore observe, that when Daniel is speaking of the infliction of capital punishment under the Chaldean dynasty, he mentions the former method, namely, casting into a furnace; and when speaking of its infliction under the Medo-Persian dynasty, he, without saying a word about the change, relates that it was to have been performed after their national manner, by casting into a den of lions: thus showing how perfectly he was acquainted with the manners and the customs of the age.

Again, we read, that at the great festival of Belshazzar, females were present at the feast. We have the authority of Xenophon, the historian of Cyrus, for saying that it was a custom peculiar to Babylon, and unknown among any subsequent nations: here also we see how accurately and minutely all the prophet states accords with the actual peculiarities of the age and country in which he professes to write.

The historian Xenophon, to whom I have already referred, further corroborates the prophet in his statement concerning Belshazzar, for he tells us that "the last king of Babylon was cruel, cowardly, and voluptuous, who despised the Deity, and spent his time in riot and debauchery;" which is precisely the character given by Daniel to Belshazzar.

It is Xenophon's description of Cyaxares, who may plainly be proved to have been the same with Darius, that he was weak, cruel, and pliable, yet furious in his anger and tyrannical in his exercise of power. Compare with this the character of Darius as delineated by the author of this book—a king who allowed his nobles to make laws for him which were unalterable, and afterwards repented and endeavoured to retract them; who

casts Daniel into the den of lions for non-compliance with his orders, and then spends the whole night in lamentation and remorse at the consequences of his cruel severity,—and you have here another sketch from the very same original. It is thus that you catch, sounding along the lapse of centuries, echoes of the grand original. It is thus that the more you become acquainted with all that man's learning can teach us, the more you will be convinced that what Prophets and Apostles wrote they wrote truly, and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God.

I have thus alluded to these little points, but points not insignificant, especially in these days when men are so anxious to find matter of reproach and accusation against the Word of God. But, in speaking to a Christian audience of the presumptive evidence that Daniel wrote this book, let me beg you to notice some of its grand distinctive features. Throughout the whole of this book the great object of it seems to be to depress all that is human, to let loose and unfold the glory of all that is divine. I always regard it as the evidence of a good sermon, that it tends to place the creature in the dust, and to exalt God upon his throne; and I lay it down as evidence that a book is in keeping with the grand and pervading tone of the whole Gospel, that it humbles man, and exalts the Creator and the Redeemer of man. Read the whole of Daniel with this idea before you, and you will see at once that it represents kingdoms, and their monarchs, their statesmen, their councils, their armies, their great men, their magnificence and their glory, as the dust only in the balance; it represents God as alone great—as casting down one and setting up another—as the Monarch of an everlasting kingdom—as “the Ancient of Days”—as “the Living God”—the Giver of wisdom—the Ruler of the present, the Revealer of the future. Throughout the book you have these two grand ideas developed:—man, how poor! how frail! how short-lived! how guilty! God, how wise! how omnipotent! how sovereign! how good! how glorious!

Again, not the least triumphant evidence of the inspiration of the Book of Daniel, is its plain and obvious fulfilment. Part of it is fulfilled prophecy; part of it, by its own statements, and from its own internal allusions, is plainly unfulfilled prophecy. The portion of it which Daniel stated would be fulfilled within a given period, has been completely fulfilled, to the very letter; and that which remains to be fulfilled, we have the clearest evidence from the past and the present, will be fulfilled with equal certainty, and equal precision. This vision which Daniel saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the two great rivers of the land of Shinar, has been partly fulfilled, partly enlarged in the Apocalypse, is now in course of fulfilment, and by-and-by will be completely and perfectly accomplished.

Porphyry, the earliest and highly celebrated sceptic, from whom and Julian the succession of sceptics traces itself, saw so plainly the fulfilment of part of the prophecies of Daniel, that he declared the book to have been composed by one who lived in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. He saw so plainly that what Daniel predicted had been fulfilled to the very letter, that he denied it was written nearly 600 years before Christ, and maintained that it was written within 200 years of that event. But the answer to this is to be found in the fact, that the Greek translation from the Hebrew, called the Septuagint, was made and scattered throughout the world 100 years before Antiochus Epiphanes was born, and therefore, that the objection of Porphyry is alike untenable, unhistorical, and absurd.

It has also been objected to this book, that there are in it so many miracles and special manifestations of God that they seem unnecessary, and, as it were, supererogatory, and that it is not consistent with what we otherwise know of God, that He should thus so frequently and upon so many occasions miraculously manifest himself. But we must consider that at this period the Jews were in captivity—their temple was destroyed—their sacred rites, their sacrifices, and their ceremonies had ceased—their priests and their Levites were gone. Now,

would it not seem perfectly natural, when all the outward signs of their religion were thus removed, that God should manifest more of himself to them, in order to keep up the light of religion in the absence of its outward and visible ordinances? Does it not seem but natural that when the outer glory was shaded, the inner glory should be made to shine the more brilliantly? Does it not seem but reasonable that when, in the land of their captivity, they lacked those sacred symbols by which they were wont to approach God, He who is not confined to temples made with hands should visit them in the time of their distress, and cheer them by special and glorious manifestations of himself? This has been the way of God in every age, and therefore the absence, not the presence, of such divine manifestations, would be a presumption against the claims of this book. There is no doubt of its inspiration. Let us therefore study it, and in these studies we shall gather, not only glimpses of the blessed future, but directions for our guidance along the troubled present.

LECTURE II.

CHRISTIAN STEADFASTNESS.

“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank : therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.”—DAN. i. 8, 9.

HAVING said so much by way of preface to my exposition of this Book, let me endeavour briefly to look at the particular verse I have selected for remark, which is really a very important one. “Then Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat.” Daniel, as far as we can gather, was very young when he was carried away a captive into Babylon. He is called “a child,” and we speak of the three children; but, as I told you on a former occasion, the word rendered “child,” means “a stripling,” “a young man;” the presumption therefore is that Daniel at this time was about fifteen or sixteen years of age; and at the end of three years, when after living on pulse and water he appeared much fairer and fatter in flesh than those of his countrymen who consented to become partakers of the royal bounty, he was probably about twenty years of age. But it may be asked, what was it that made Daniel so firmly refuse to eat of the king’s meat or drink of the king’s wine, when there was so great a temptation to do so? It could not be that he thought it sinful to drink wine, or improper to dine with the king of the country. I have no doubt he knew just as well as others that wine was more agreeable to his taste than water, and that to dine at the royal

table would be a great honour; but the reason of his refusal was evidently this—the king of Babylon, like all heathens, was in the habit of what we would call “asking a blessing” before his meals, or, as it is more popularly termed, “saying grace;” in doing which he took a portion of his food and dedicated it to the god whom he worshipped, and also a portion of the wine he was about to drink, and poured out a libation to his idol before tasting it himself; and thus, as it were, consecrated, according to his idea, the whole to the heathen god. Daniel now felt that he could not conscientiously partake of it, because it would have been, as I shall hereafter show, implicating himself with heathenism, and acting unfaithfully to his country, his religion, and his God; and he was prepared to run all hazards rather than even appear to do so. What was it, then, that made Daniel thus resolute and firm? It was this: Daniel had received an early religious education; he was not brought up at a school where he learned the world and nothing more, or mere secular education to the exclusion of religion, just as if that were possible. He was not educated at a school where he was taught what the French schoolmasters are now teaching—pantheism and socialism; but he was brought up at the home of his father, where he acquired the knowledge of the God of Abraham, and that savingly and with profit. Early education was to Daniel, under God, the means of his preservation. The deep engraving of truth upon the heart of the young is never altogether effaced. Those impressions of divine truth that are made on our hearts in youth often emerge in after years with all the freshness and the beauty of yesterday. Silenced they may be; extinguished they rarely are: overshadowed they may be; but obliterated they cannot be. I know, when I learned that Scriptural but extremely abstruse work—perhaps more so than need be—“The Shorter Catechism,” I did not understand it; in those days education was not so well comprehended, and it was not thought so necessary to explain to the understanding what was to be stored in the memory, as it is now; but my memory was

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stored with the truths of that precious document; and when I grew up I found those truths which had been laid aside in its cells as propositions which I could neither understand nor make use of, become illuminated by the sunshine of after years, and, like some hidden and mysterious writing, reveal in all their beauty and their fulness those precious truths which I had neither seen nor comprehended before, and which have been so long and are now preached in the church of my fathers, and no less so, I trust, in every section of the evangelical church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words spoken by parents to their children in the privacy of home, or by teachers to their pupils in the more busy scene of the schoolroom, are like words spoken in a whispering-gallery, and will be clearly heard at the distance of years, and along the corridors of ages that are yet to come. Teach your children early truths, even if they cannot comprehend them, and those truths, impressed upon their minds when young, will prove like the lode-star to the mariner upon a dark and stormy sea, associated with a mother's love, with a father's example, with the roof-tree beneath which they lived and loved, and will prove mighty in after-life to mould the man and enable him to adorn and improve the age in which he is placed. The heart of a child is ductile; it is a soft soil, into which we may cast seed which shall either produce poisonous weeds, or spring up and expand into fruit-bearing trees. Reverence the child—that little white pinafore in the infant-school ought to be looked upon at least as reverently as the black apron of the most learned bishop or archbishop that ever lived. It has an importance that you cannot over-estimate; that child may play a part that shall be terrible as that of a Napoleon—the scourge of nations; or beautiful as that of Daniel—the faithful amid the faithless many. “Train up a child in the way he *should* go,”—mark the words, not “in the way he would go,” that is the French system of education; but “in the way he *should* go,—and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Let me notice another feature in the Prophet. Daniel

was of noble if not of royal birth. He was of the royal tribe of Judah; and this shows us that whilst "not *many* mighty, not *many* noble are called," there are some even of the highest rank who have adorned by their practice the faith which they professed. Isaiah and Daniel were of the royal tribe; David was a shepherd-boy; Amos was a herdsman; Zechariah, a captive from Babylon; Elisha, a ploughman; so that we have among the Old Testament prophets, the prince and the peasant, the noble and the commoner, all equally inspired by the Spirit of God, and proclaiming with equal distinctness the truths of the everlasting Gospel. I know that the minister of the Gospel should look upon the conversion of a single soul as transcending and eclipsing everything; but under the present constitution of society—whether that constitution be good or bad, it is not for me here to discuss—rank and wealth and power have a mighty influence, and we ought specially to thank God when families occupying the highest place in the land are found, as they are found, more and more every day, allying themselves to that which gives splendour to the most ancient coronet, and grandeur to the mightiest and most illustrious crown. Daniel then was of the royal tribe, and probably of the royal family, a man of rank and dignity, and he enlisted all his power and all his influence in the service of his country, his religion, and his God.

In the third place, Daniel and his three friends were evidently scholars; they were men of learning and talent. Daniel was skilled in all the secular as well as the religious knowledge of his country; and when we contend for sacred education, you must not suppose that we mean to imply that secular and scientific knowledge is useless to you, or in any way to disparage the pursuit of it. Only read the subsequent part of this chapter, and you will find that Daniel was skilled in all the learning of the times, and it proved of eminent advantage to him and his countrymen. For aught we know, those Babylonians, gazing upon the starry firmament in that splendid atmosphere, and in that glorious climate upon the plains

of Shinar, may have had a knowledge of astronomy which might make even Newton look less if we only knew all that the Chaldeans knew. Daniel, however, was a Hebrew, and was taught in a Hebrew school—science associated with religion. And such knowledge proved of use to him, for it was a great means of his exaltation to power. At the present day the possession of sound secular knowledge, in India, for instance, is of very great importance. I need not tell you that among the Hindoos in India we have 100,000,000 of fellow-subjects; with them science is always most intimately connected with religion, so much so that it is one of the principles of their creed that all knowledge is equally inspired. They believe their chemistry, their astronomy, their geology, to be as much inspired as any principle in their religion. If, then, you can prove to a Hindoo that any part of his science is wrong, you have not only made him a better philosopher, but you have taken out a stone from the very arch of which his whole system of belief is composed. When the Church of Scotland sent out her missionaries, she made the experiment; but when they tried to teach the Hindoos science as well as religion, some people said, “What, are missionaries going out from a Christian church to teach astronomy?” and certainly the objection seemed plausible enough: but the result has proved how complete was the popular misapprehension. To give an instance of the advantages arising from the course we adopted, I may state, that the Hindoos believe that the earth is not a round globe, but an extended plain; and that when an eclipse takes place, it is some great animal whose shadow produces this effect upon the moon, and that it betokens some disaster: but when one of our missionaries proved to a Brahmin what is the true figure of our globe, and demonstrated to him that an eclipse would take place on a certain day, and at a certain hour, and would be visible at a certain place, he had proved to the Brahmin that what he believed to be an inspired dogma was a gross scientific blunder; and by so doing he not only made the Brahmin a better philosopher, which was not worth doing, but he succeeded

in shaking his faith in his whole system of religious belief, and thus led him to infer that if one article in his creed were false, might not all its articles be false together? This shows us the great importance of teaching scientific knowledge. Now, Daniel was acquainted with all branches of knowledge, and it was of great use to him, as it ever will be in the hand and under the control of religion. So connected it becomes a Levite in the temple of God, a handmaid of the bride. It acts as a pioneer of the Gospel till the spoils that are taken from Egypt shall beautify the temple of Salem, and all nature bring its trophies to adorn the Redeemer's triumph.

It is evident, in the next place, that though the King of Babylon liked Daniel the scholar, he did not much like Daniel the Christian. He wished Daniel and his friends to be taught all the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans; and he wished him at the same time to be taught to serve the gods and sympathise with the religion of the Chaldeans. The king liked Daniel's scholarship, but not his religion. He would gladly avail himself of Daniel's science; but he would have liked it separate and distinct from Daniel's religion. So it is with the world still; men admire an eloquent sermon, if there be not much Gospel in it—they are pleased with an argumentative discourse, if it does not touch some tender part of their consciences. There are many who would be delighted with Christianity if they could only get rid of that continual appeal to their conscience which runs through the Bible. They have the greatest respect for the decencies of Christianity, and would even tolerate real Christianity, provided it does not become too earnest—too urgent for supremacy and mastery in the human heart.

But the King of Babylon not only wished to unteach Daniel his Christianity; but, in order to detach him still more completely from his Hebrew associations, he changed his name. He had the more reason for doing so in this case, because the names of each of the three children had "God" in it, and thus served to remind them of the religion they professed. But every name which the Chaldee monarch gave them was either merely civil and

social, or contained an allusion actually idolatrous. "Daniel," for instance, signifies "God my Judge," "Hananiah," the original of the Latin "John," means "Grace of Jehovah;" "Mishael," "Asked of God;" "Azariah," "The Lord is my Keeper." These names were to the exiled youths, witnesses for God, and mementos of the faith of their fathers. The king of Babylon, therefore, called Daniel "Belteshazzar," which means, "The treasurer of the god Bel;" Hananiah he called "Shadrach," "The messenger of the King;" and Mishael he called "Meshach," a name denoting, "The devotee of the goddess Shesach;" and Azariah had his name changed into "Abed-nego," which signifies "The servant of Nego," one of the gods of Babylon. Thus Nebuchadnezzar heathenised their names, in hopes that he might thereby be the better able to heathenise their hearts. There is much in a name. A great poet has said—

"What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet"

Abstractedly and logically, he is correct; but practically we find that there is a great deal in a name. So thought the King of Babylon; and when he changed the names of the young Hebrew captives, he imagined that he had made a grand step towards changing their creed and their character. But in this he was mistaken: the alteration of names did not alter the conduct of those that bore them. The Hebrew youths made no resistance, but quietly took the names assigned them, just as Christians have ever taken patiently the reproaches of the world, and borne them joyfully; but, even in this new nomenclature, they heard the undertone or echo of those dear and holy names which their fathers had given them; and they felt that though a tyrant might change their names, no tyrant can change a Christian's conviction or a Christian's heart. Neither the sheepskins nor the goatskins of the martyrs made them less lovely before God; the beauty of the king's daughter is not a beauty that man can make or mar; her beauty is within, it is a moral—a hidden, and so a lasting beauty.

The King of Babylon, we read, yet further to identify these four Hebrew youths with himself and his religion, sent them food from the royal table. We know that this was a mark of great generosity. It was, as it were, saying to these Hebrew youths, If you will become priests of our temple, we will give you an endowment from the state. I do not say here whether endowment is right or wrong. Truth can do without it, and may lawfully take it; but truth is not to be promoted by the sword, neither is error to be maintained by the treasury. This sending them meat from the royal table was a mark of esteem—a degree of preferment; and as such it should be received with gratitude; but it was refused in this case because it involved the sacrifice of principle. Every Jew was forbidden by the law to eat any but animals of certain classes which were called clean. Herein lay one objection to the Hebrew youths accepting the proffered honour of eating from the royal table. But whether our meat be from the table of the monarch or elsewhere, it must not lead us to abandon one jot of what we believe to be true, or to adopt the least item of what we believe to be unscriptural and untrue. The object of the king, as I have explained to you, was partly to engage their sympathies with heathenism, and partly to identify them more with the idol gods whom he worshipped. But another objection on the part of Daniel and his friends arose from the fact, to which I have before alluded, that it was customary with the Chaldeans, as with other heathen nations, always to commence their meals by the dedication of their food to the idols whom they adored. Speaking of this subject, the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. x. 27, 28, “If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience’ sake: but if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that showed it, and for conscience’ sake.” This was just the case of the Hebrew youths; and in settling this question they argued thus: “Shall I,” said Daniel, “ask my conscience, or shall I ask my appetite? shall I cease to live as an Israelite, or

shall I cease to live as the *protégé* of my royal master? shall I give up the dignity reflected from the throne, or shall I give up the honour that cometh from God only?" Had Daniel been one of those modern easy, accommodating Christians, who when they go to Rome say, "We must do as Rome does," and when they go to Constantinople, "We must do as Constantinople does," he would have acted very differently. But he felt that truth has no latitude; the living religion of the living God knows no longitude. It is to be the same in London as in Paris; it is to have supremacy in all countries and in all climes; whether in Constantinople, or in Rome, or in England, we must be the worshippers of the living God, by Christ the living way, and through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter of all that believe. My dear friends, make the world bow to your religion; never let your religion bow to the world. Let the world fail, and let give way who will, the earnest Christian and the honest man never will give way. Do not try to be rude; that is not necessary. Do not offensively obtrude what you believe upon others; but when it is demanded—when you are called upon to sacrifice your principles and to deny your Lord, remember that there can be little hesitation when the question is whether you are to obey God, or to obey man. Daniel so acted, and Daniel was blessed in doing so.

Be ye followers of Daniel, and of all "those who through faith and patience inherited the promises." Study Daniel, and copy him, as far as he copied Christ. We admire this star, because it shines in the light of Christ the original.

" Faithful found

Among the faithless; faithful only he,
 Among innumerable false; unmoved,
 Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
 His loyalty he kept, his love and zeal.
 Nor number nor example with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single."

LECTURE III.

LIVING TO GOD IN LITTLE THINGS.

“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure-house of his god. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar: and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs

said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink : for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat : and as thou seest, deal with thy servants."—DANIEL i. 1—13.

IN my introductory discourse upon this truly interesting book, I have endeavoured first of all to show you that the assumption that the book was written at the epoch at which it is said to have been written, viz. about 600 years before the birth of Christ, can be proved to be fact by internal as well as collateral evidence. I quoted various passages from the book itself in proof of this fact, for most of which I am indebted to Hengstenberg, the celebrated German vindicator of the Book of Daniel and of the Pentateuch; and I showed from several circumstances that the book must have been penned at the time, in the country, and under the circumstances in which it professes to have been written.

I then referred to the circumstances in which the four captive Hebrew youths were placed. They had been brought up in the knowledge of the true God, and in the enjoyment of all the religious privileges of Jerusalem; and now, in the land of their captivity, and among their heathen conquerors, the principles they had imbibed in their youth were put to the severest test.

I endeavoured from these facts to draw the inference, that a Christian education is one of the greatest blessings you can bestow on those that are around you. The infant generation of to-day are the adult generation of to-morrow; and very much what we now make them, that they will be. As Christian men we must feel it hard and painful to see the child—the all but child—

brought up at the police court, and sent to the treadmill, or banished to Botany Bay, when we recollect that it is those who read the intelligence who are to be blamed for leaving that child without the means of Christian and Scriptural instruction; and it may be that much of the blood of those that thus perish in their sins may lie at our door. At all events, no Christian congregation is warranted in being without a Christian school; and the larger and the more influential the congregation, the larger and the better supported ought the school to be. Depend upon it, that the first lesson a son receives from a mother is the last lesson that a son recollects upon earth; and though the earliest truths that we are taught at school may be silenced for a season, or overborne by the din and the roar of the wheels and the machinery of Mammon, yet the hour will come when that early lesson, as if touched by some living influence, will instantly revive in all its beauty and its freshness; and, as in the case of John Newton, when tossed upon the tempestuous deep, conscience will reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. So it was in the case of Daniel; the lessons he had learned in his childhood were the lessons that guided him, comforted him, strengthened him, when a captive in the midst of Babylon.

I noticed another feature; namely, that Nebuchadnezzar the king, seeing these youths well instructed, evidently well educated, and one of them, there is reason to believe, of royal lineage, was anxious to make them adopt his religion. He did not try on this occasion the great blunder that is sometimes perpetrated, of driving them into his religion, or persecuting and punishing them—as if the punishment of the body could, in any case, promote the conviction of the soul. He tried a far more artful plan. First of all, he changed their names; for he knew that so long as they were called by their Hebrew names, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, so long there would be in their names mementos of early lessons and early associations. He therefore determined upon the expedient,—and it was a most clever thought

in this case, by the grace of God, an unsuccessful one,—of changing the names of the Hebrew youths; hoping that, as they forgot their names, they would forget the creed with which they were associated. As I told you, every one of these three names denotes something in connexion with God, and thereby served to remind them of the religion of their fathers. He, therefore, called Daniel, Belteshazzar; Hananiah, Shadrach; Mishael, Meshach; and Azariah, Abed-nego; which were all names containing some allusion to his heathen idols. A Christian name is a very beautiful thing; and we should always prefer to give our children names that in themselves are eloquent with whatever things are pure, and beautiful, and just, or which are by their associations connected with the good and great who have preceded us to glory. And we cannot but sometimes lament, when we are called upon to baptise a child by some name that reminds us of the Gods of Greece or Rome, or the idols of the heathen, and not of those sainted names that have passed before us into immortality.

After this plan had been adopted by Nebuchadnezzar he followed it up by another. He thought that these Hebrew youths, having had their names thus changed, might, by Chaldean food, be made much more easily the subjects of Chaldean instruction. He, therefore, did not allow them to be fed on the ordinary food of captives, but he ordered that they should receive their meat from the king's table. Daniel immediately refused it,—some would say, on very paltry grounds. Those very liberal Christians, but whom I venture to call very latitudinarian Christians;—for it is very possible to be liberal and yet not to be latitudinarian; liberal all Christianity bids us be—latitudinarian not one verse of it authorises us to be; we cannot be too liberal in conceding to a brother the largest husk of prejudice; we cannot be too strict in refusing to compromise the least living seed of vital and essential truth;—now, some of these “liberal,” or rather, as I said, latitudinarian Christians, would have said that when Daniel refused the king's meat, and preferred pulse and water, he was a very scrupulous Jew; others

would have said, perhaps he thought that drinking wine was in itself sinful, and that water alone was lawful; others would say, he need not have been so very strict in Babylon as he was in Jerusalem; that in Rome men should do as Rome does; in Constantinople men should do as Constantinople does; and in London men should do as London does. How can any one seriously say so? Is duty a thing of latitude and longitude? Does that which is duty here become the reverse there? If I read my Bible right—if I interpret the first lessons of conscience right, duty is like its God, the same everywhere; and what is duty, and loyalty, and allegiance, to Him, is the same whether amid polar snows or in the torrid zone; in Rome, where the superstitious hierarch reigns; or in Constantinople, where the fallen star and the crescent arc. Daniel felt it so, and he therefore refused the royal bounty. But you ask, was there a valid ground for refusing it? I answer there was; and I thus explain the reason of it. Among the heathens, before commencing a meal, the meat was first offered or dedicated to the Lares or household gods, and a portion of the wine was poured out as a libation to the idols whom they adored. What we call “saying grace,” or, to use a much more Christian phrase, “asking a blessing,” was among them performed by offering a portion of the meat and a portion of the wine to the presiding divinities of their houses. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, reasons thus upon the subject; “It is nothing to you, of course, that he has done so; but if he means to entrap you into an expression of sympathy with his idolatry, by eating of his food thus dedicated to an idol, then you must abstain from it.” Daniel acted on this principle; and he preferred the pulse and water, the least nutritious of the elements of nature, to the daintier cheer of the royal table; because he would rather have had, what I trust you would rather have, the smiles of your God from heaven, than the patronage of the mightiest king that ever swayed a sceptre upon the earth.

Time would not permit me, in my last lecture, to draw all the practical lessons from this fact which I had

intended to do. I will, therefore, turn your attention to them now. Daniel's refusal seemed, at first sight, somewhat uncalled for. Refusing the meat from the royal table, and the wine from the royal cellar, seemed, I say, frivolous to the worldling, but it involved a great principle. His refusal seemed small to the eye, but it was the turning point of his Christianity. To have acted otherwise would have been no concession of a prejudice,—it would have been no mere giving way in matters of detail; it would have been surrender of principle,—compromise of truth,—apostasy from his religion; and Daniel felt that it was a light thing to be judged of man, for He that judged him was God. And have not we something to learn from Daniel's conduct? He was placed under a darker dispensation, when the belief of Christ spoke good things, but spoke them faintly; while we are placed in a brighter dispensation, where, as I showed you in a morning discourse, the belief of Christ speaks better things, and speaks them eloquently and distinctly. Are there not some among us, against whom these Hebrew captives will rise up in judgment in this matter? Are there any here who would sacrifice their conscience with its awful requirements, to their temporary and worldly convenience? who would stifle the convictions that are deepest, in order to gain some temporary and evanescent advantage,—who would give up an article in their creed rather than miss a good place, or lose a valuable living? Are there any here who would risk the condemnation of their God rather than incur the sneer of man, or lose the king's meat when that meat is the most rich, or the king's wine when it is red in the cup? If such there be, Daniel even now rises from his grave, and will rise at the resurrection morn and bear witness against them, for seeking their temporal advantage,—though in so doing I shall show that they have missed it,—and forgetting and neglecting their eternal and inexhaustible obligations to God. If this be so, listen to this the first great lesson that I draw from the passage before us. The Lord said, "He that is faithful in a little, is faithful also

in much; and he that is unjust in a little is unjust also in much." There is more force, more point, more application, to ourselves in this sentence than we are sometimes disposed to admit. Many Christians are like Naaman, the Syrian, ever trying to do some great thing, and thinking that if a great crisis were to come they would have their nerves prepared to meet it, and in God's strength they would be able to triumph. Many Christians tell us, that they cannot find a place large enough for the discharge of their duties; to them religion becomes a sort of romance; and instead of quietly laying one brick upon the earth, they are constantly building a thousand castles in the air—instead of discharging the plain every-day duty, and showing their faithfulness and love in it, they pass life in looking for some grand occasion for the display of their Christian virtues,—thinking that though they cannot live as Christians should live, if the crisis were to come they would die as martyrs have died. You are mistaken. If you cannot be faithful in the least, you cannot be faithful in much. I believe it to be a very important thought, that there are no little things in morals, though there may be little things in matter. Have not you yourselves found that many a great crisis which has absorbed your whole soul for years has left yet upon it no deep impression that survives at the present moment? And I appeal to some other man's experience; has not sometimes a random conversation in a railway carriage,—an accidental interview with a friend in the place of business,—the turning of your foot into a place of worship that was near, because it rained, instead of going to your usual place of worship at a greater distance—have not little things such as these, and such as we call so, become the turning-points in your character; so that, humanly speaking, if some such apparently small event had not taken place, the whole after conduct of your life would have been changed? Thus, we learn, that events which seem to us frivolous and unimportant, may become the Thermopylæ of a Christian's conflict, the Marathon of a nation's being; the turning-point of everlasting life, or everlasting death.

Let me notice in the next place, in order to vindicate and enforce faithfulness in what are called little things—for it was Daniel's faithfulness in things such as these which gave tone and complexion to his whole after life—that in the providence and the creation of God, you will find that God as Creator, or God as Provider, expends as much care, wisdom, time, if I may use the expression, certainly attention, on the very least things as he does on the very greatest. If you examine the petal of a rose you will find it as exquisitely and as delicately tinted and touched by the pencil of God as the largest star that shines and stands like a sentinel before the throne of God. If you take the mightiest orb that the telescope brings within your horizon, you will find that it is not finished with greater care than the smallest molecule of matter that the microscope reveals to your view. In all God's works, you will see infinite detail, exquisite elaboration of the minutest and the most microscopic things, patient labour, process, attention; and if we would be like God, let us take care to be faithful in the very least duty as well as in the largest sacrifice that he requires of us.

In the next place, if you will notice that sublime life—which is sublimer than providence, more stupendous than creation—the life of the Son of God upon earth, you will notice what has often been overlooked, that, according to the same great analogy, Jesus paid attention to little things in his life, as great, as marked, as striking, as to the greatest acts that he did. And I have felt it in my own mind, as well as noticed it in others, that when we quote the character of Jesus, and are trying to show how grand it was, we point to him stretching out his hand, laying it upon the crested waves of the unruly ocean, and making it lie down and be still; we quote him turning water into wine, opening the closed eye, and unstopping the deaf ear. And we say how great was He! But I doubt whether these are the highest proofs of the greatness of the Son of God. You find, at all events, that while he could thus display his mighty power in these great things, he yet descended to what

you would call very minute things. I watch him, and I find him one moment speaking in beautiful but truth-breathing tones to Martha, exhorting her not to be over anxious about the affairs of her household. I find him again sitting down weary and wayworn at the well of Samaria, and expending upon one poor woman more of eloquent, and earnest, and impressive reasoning than he ever expended upon kings, and counsellors, and high-priests.

And just after he had wrought the great miracle of turning the few loaves and fishes into food for five thousand, you find him closing that stupendous evidence of stupendous power, by bidding his disciples gather up the crumbs that remained in order that nothing might be lost. Or, to notice a yet more striking instance, when he hung upon the cross in that dire and bitter agony which is so graphically recorded by the Evangelists, and which Christians, Sabbath after Sabbath, commemorate, with the whole burden of a world's transgressions resting upon him, do you recollect that touching and affecting fact, that while one moment he could cry, in anguish which no language can depict, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" the next moment he descends to say to John, "Behold thy mother!" committing, even in this hour of overwhelming sorrow, a weeping mother to the care of a faithful friend. And when, having completed the stupendous work in which he was engaged, he rose triumphant from the grave—when the great stone was rolled away at his bidding, and all the obstructions of the tomb were rent asunder at his word, do you remember, what we might consider a very petty and trivial incident, but really not so, that we are told by the Evangelist that the napkin that had been wrapped around the Saviour's head was found, not left behind in a state of confusion, but rolled up and laid aside by itself? and how he said to the women whose affection led them first to the sepulchre, "Go and tell my disciples *and Peter?*" What attention to little things! What care over minute things! What faithfulness in that which is least, as

well as in that which is great!—a precedent and an example that we should follow in his steps.

There is often as much real religion to be shown in little things as in great things. You have in Daniel all the feeling and the religious principle that a martyr would require for a martyr's triumphs, but it is exhibited in a circumstance the most minute and apparently unimportant. As great love may be displayed to our relatives in attention to little things, as in great and laborious sacrifices. Peter could unsheath his sword, and cut off the ear of Malchus to defend his Master; but Peter could not help denying his Lord when accused by the servants of being a friend of Jesus. We have learned little Christianity if we have not learned this, that it needs as much grace to live divinely, as it does to die divinely. It is possible to give our bodies to be burned, and to distribute all our goods to feed the poor, and yet not to have that love which endureth all things, beareth all things, hopeth all things, and is the highest evidence of our connexion with, and our belonging to God. Then, my dear friends, feeling this,—seeing that there is weight in what I have now said, because there is truth in it, let us seek to be thus faithful in that which is least. Let us ever remember that to be singular for the mere sake of singularity is absurd; but to be singular when the call of duty and faithfulness to God demands it, is the evidence of a true Christian. Let us purpose, like Daniel, not to defile ourselves with any meat, even though it be the king's. It may be unfashionable, but it is Christian. It may look occasionally singular, but it is the singularity of principle, not the singularity of caprice. It may cost us much self-denial, but it is a part of our warfare. It may be construed as scrupulosity or fastidiousness, but it is really an element of Christian character. And if we desire to be steadfast and to conquer in the minute as well as in the mighty, in the least as well as in the greatest, let us recollect that we have the same source of strength and of victory that Daniel had, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts;" only we must not, as some

persons do, confound two things that differ completely. They think they cannot be faithful without being very rude; they fancy they cannot be true to God without being very discourteous, and perhaps very vulgar in their expressions towards man. Now, whether vulgarity and rudeness be sins or virtues, it is needless to discuss; at all events they are not certainly evidence that there is faithfulness along with them. Notice Daniel's example. He combines all the courtesy of the most finished courtier, with all the steadfastness of the most devoted Christian. When he was told that his name should be changed he bore it with all meekness; the ancient followers of the cross were clothed with sheepskins and goatskins; they wandered in deserts and caves of the earth, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they were branded with every ignominy, and regarded by all men as the very off-scouring of the earth. Yet they took it all patiently,—so did Daniel bear *his* cross; but when it came to a point of principle, when he was ordered to eat the king's meat, and thereby deny his religion, we do not find him fly into a furious state of excitement, or use the language of bravado; there was no outbreak of temper, no boasting, no insolence or defiance. He did not say, "Tell the king I will not do so." That would have been violence, rudeness, insolence—the least effective, and the least expedient. He had confidence in his religious principles; he trusted in the goodness of his cause; he relied upon the God whom he served; and the reply which he made to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over him and his fellows, was this, "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee,"—the language of perfect respect,—“ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.” What gentleness and courtesy! as well as what a sanctified heart! the highest Christianity is always associated with the highest courtesy. My conviction is that none but a finished Christian can be a finished gentleman; for if there be genuine Christianity

in the heart the manners will be but the outward evidences of the inward feelings of the heart—gentle, beautiful, courteous, bearing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things. We find that Melzar was so charmed and delighted to see so much self-denial united to so great courtesy and gentleness that he immediately permitted the experiment to be made, and the result is stated in verse 15, that at the end of ten days their countenances were found fairer and fatter in flesh than those of the children that did eat of the king's meat.

LECTURE IV.

TRUE PRINCIPLE IS TRUE EXPEDIENCY.

“*As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Haniah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.*”—DANIEL. i. 17—21.

THE next lesson that we have to draw from the closing verses of the chapter is a very important one—it is the result of Daniel’s experiment. Was Daniel a loser by his firm adherence to principle? Not at all, it was all the very reverse. We find that Daniel’s faithfulness to conscience, his allegiance to his God, his courteous but firm refusal to do that which was sinful, was even in this world blessed to him, and even in temporal affairs turned to his advantage. Now I wish young men especially to look at this; because the lesson that I am drawing from it is a much needed one. The four children were found at the end of ten days to have been so blessed of God, that not only were they, as we have seen, fairer and fatter in flesh than any of the children—*i.e.* the children of Israel—who gave up their consciences and ate of the king’s meat; but the result was, in the end, that in all matters

of knowledge and skill, they were many times wiser than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all the realm. God honoured his servants. The result of this faithfulness to God was promotion in the palace and the favour of the king.

The lesson, therefore, that I draw from the whole subject is in these words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you." In other words, make religion the great thing, and all the rest that you want will fall into its place. You have heard of, and many of you have probably read, Josephus, the Jewish historian. He was the servant of the Roman emperors, Titus and Vespasian, and of course he was anxious, as you might expect in a man not troubled with very much conscience or very much religion, to please and propitiate his masters as much as possible. He thus comments upon the conduct of Daniel and his fellows in preferring pulse and water to wine and meat from the royal table. Of course, he could not say that it was Daniel's refusal to patronise or to connive at the idolatry of the heathen that made him so accepted and beloved, for this would have been to offend his Roman masters, who were worshippers of similar idols; but he gives this explanation:—"By the diet they took they had their minds in some measure more pure and less burdened, and so fit for learning, and had their bodies in better condition for hard labour; for they neither had the former oppressed with variety of meats, nor the latter effeminate on the same account; so they readily amassed all the learning of the Hebrews and the Chaldeans." Such is the account of the matter given by this Jewish historian. Josephus was very much like some of our modern philosophers, who are always glad when they can explain a phenomenon without God. If you ask them anything about the firmament above or the earth below; if you ask them for a solution of the plague, the pestilence, or the recent epidemic; if you ask them for an explanation of any one fact or phenomenon in science, in history, in creation, in Providence; they have some hundreds of what they call laws, and

they say, "Such is the law of nature:" and no doubt there are laws; and as long as the word is used to denote harmony and consistency of movement, regularity and order, so long it is good; but the moment you are satisfied with a reference to the law as an explanation of the phenomenon, that moment you are working with Josephus and with the heathen, and attributing to lords many and gods many that which is the clear evidence of the presence of the living and the true God. The reason why Daniel prospered upon pulse and water, is not that a vegetarian diet, as some say, is the most wholesome, or that water is far more conducive to health than wine—though I believe that the less wine you drink the better, if you have no physical need for it; and I am sure that in perfect health there is very little need for it. But this was not the reason why Daniel prospered upon pulse and water. It was the blessing of the Lord added to the pulse and water, which made them far more nutritive than the king's meat and the king's wine, with that blessing withdrawn from them. In other words, he sought first God's kingdom and God's righteousness, and all other things were added to him. He found this to be true, "Godliness hath promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

And now I say again to you, my dear friends, as the inference from all this, "Seek first to do God's will, and all other things shall be added unto you." Do not take anxious thought about to-morrow, but take prayerful thought about to-day. Depend upon it that the vigorous discharge of to-day's duties will be the best preparation for to-morrow's trials. Let alone to-morrow's cares till the sun of to-morrow looks upon them and awakens them. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." And I know nothing more absurd in itself, and yet nothing more common, than for men to scrape all to-morrow's trials, that may be or that may not be, and add them to the duties and the trials of to-day, forgetting that God gives us strength for each day, and not strength for that day and the next likewise; that God gives us bread for to-day, and yet not bread for to-day and to-morrow.

You do God's will and stand by your post, and discharge your duties this day, and to-morrow will take care of itself. "Seek first God's glory and God's will, and all other things will be added unto you."

And therefore I would say, enlarging and expanding this sentiment, seek first to know God before other things. By all means study science; but not science, not philosophy, not literature, not music, not painting *first*, but study Christianity *first*. Take the knowledge of God into the school, into the university, into the encyclopædia, as first and last. Hear, indeed, the wisdom of Solomon, but hear first the wisdom of one greater than Solomon. Do not go through Solomon to Christ, but go through Christ to Solomon. Seek first to know Him whom to know is eternal life; then study science, and literature, and painting, and music, and all that this world's learning can teach. We do not want to discourage secular knowledge, but to plant in its bosom that which will adorn, exalt, and sanctify both the study and the student, and make the one an ornament and the other an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

In the next place let me say, study first of all the safety of the soul. The first thought you have to think of, the first duty you have to discharge, is the duty that you owe to the soul. Who can calculate this problem, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Our first effort should be to obtain an answer to this question, What shall I do to be saved? My dear friends, no man ever yet set out to gain the world by the sacrifice of his soul, and succeeded in his object. The words are, "*if* you gain the world;" it does not imply, that if you set out to gain the world at such a cost you are sure eventually to gain it. Twenty men set out, all determined to be rich, and nineteen are strewed like wrecks on the highway. And have you not found, on the other hand, that the man who set out determined to provide for the safety of his soul in the first instance has had other things added to him unexpectedly, and in far greater abundance than he could have anticipated?

And if this be true, carry out the same principle in your families. I speak to fathers and mothers; seek *first* to make your children *Christians, next, and only next*, to be *gentlemen*. Send your children rather, I beseech you, to a school where they will be taught to pray fervently, than to a school where they will be taught to dance after the most approved mode and according to the most elegant movements. Be anxious rather to make your children Christians than to make them Churchmen, or Dissenters, or Episcopalians, or Presbyterians. Depend upon it that the old Adam will learn soon enough to fight about free church and independency, and episcopacy, and presbytery, and about all the "isms" to be found in the catalogue of man; but the last thing and the most difficult thing that they will learn is to care about their souls, or to think about God. Teach your children that pulse and plain water, with the blessing of God, is sweeter and better and more nutritive than the king's meat and the king's wine without it.

In the next place I would say, in fixing to attend on a ministry, carry out the same principle; seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you. Do not attach the greatest importance to the section of the Church; but you who are an Independent, prefer Christian and Scriptural doctrine with episcopacy, rather than unscriptural doctrine with independency; and you who are an Episcopalian, prefer to hear the Gospel from the minister of an Independent denomination, rather than to hear Puseyism and Popery from a bishop of your own church. And so with respect to the Scotch Church—I prefer it, and think it the best in existence; and why should I not? I was baptised in it, I have studied it, I know it, I love it; but if there were deadly error preached in the parish church I was born by, and if the Gospel was preached by a poor Methodist local preacher, in a neighbouring barn, I would go and hear the poor Methodist preacher, and leave the parish minister with empty pews. When the question is, shall it be bread or poison? by all means give me good bread in a silver basket; but rather give

me good bread on a wooden trencher than poison in a golden basket. Take other things in their place, other things think about, other things prefer, but this you *must have*; and common sense, which is nearest to the highest Christianity, will insist upon making this the first and the paramount consideration.

In the next place, carry out this principle in fixing upon a house to dwell in. In this world we are constantly changing. Let me tell those who have mansions and those who have cottages—those who have palaces and those who have cellars, that they are all equally precarious in their tenure, for there are two ways to get rid of them: either the inhabitant will be removed from the house, or the house will be removed from the inhabitant. There are two ways of separating the one from the other; we are but dwellers in tents; strangers and pilgrims as all our fathers were; and therefore, if you are changing your house, do not, like Lot, prefer the well-watered plain, just within range of the din and the noise of Sodom, basking in its sunshine, listening to its noise, as to the sweetest and best music; but rather prefer a much smaller house, with a less beautiful lawn, and less spacious grounds, and far fewer conveniences, that basks in the sunshine of the countenance of God, and that gives you the opportunity of hearing the Gospel of the blessed Jesus. Prefer a house near to a pious and evangelical minister, rather than a house near to the hall of a noble or the palace of a king. Be content with bread—living bread—where you can know God, rather than the king's meat and royal wine without that knowledge.

And so, my dear friends, I would urge you to carry out the same principle in entering upon any business. Do not select a business inconsistent with the exercise of your Christian duties, or in which you must sacrifice your Christian principles in order to practise what it requires. Only let me add, do not be rash in saying, I cannot live as a Christian here, and therefore I will abandon it. That is very often an excuse for self-indulgence. It is very often an excuse for not deter-

mining to be firm and faithful. It is supposing that you can do your duty best on the soft lawn, and not on the hard and tented battle-field. Wherever Providence has placed you, make the experiment if you can faithfully serve God there. And if you find that you cannot serve God, then you have no alternative. If you are about to choose a business, let it be one in which you can secure your Sabbaths. Give not up your Sabbaths; do not sacrifice them. It is not rich men who will feel the loss of such an institution, but the poor. Depend upon it that the working man will get no more wages for his seven days' work than he now gets for six. It is a maxim of political economy which is worth repeating from the pulpit, that the amount of wages is always dependent upon the amount of labour. Where there are few labourers and much to be done, there wages will be high; where there are many labourers and less to be done, there wages will be low. Now if you add a seventh day over all the kingdom, to the six working days of the week, you bring a seventh part more of all the labourers in the land into the labour market, and wages will proportionately decrease. Rely upon it, that by sacrificing your Sabbaths you will be dead losers even in a temporal point of view.

Therefore, my dear friends, stand fast for your privileges; "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." It is the poor man's privilege; the Sabbath is emphatically the poor man's day; and nothing is to me more beautiful than this thought, that there is a day that comes round among the days of the week, in which the poorest man and the richest man may meet in the sanctuary, and say, "We are peers; though equally sinners by nature, we are equally saints by grace;" and in this world, where men have divided so much and monopolised so much, there is still a place where the rich and the poor, the mightiest noble and the meanest peasant, can meet together and feel that "the Lord is the maker of them all." I advocate the maintenance of the Sabbath on these low grounds; but I advocate it also on higher grounds than these, but which I need not now repeat.

I say again, therefore, my dear friends, never give up your Sabbaths. Labour, as many young men do labour, to gain more time on your week-day evenings for the cultivation of your minds, and for the study of all that can adorn, and beautify, and perfect them, as Christians and heirs of immortality; but never, never surrender this greatest of privileges—the Sabbath.

And lastly, I would say, in your homes “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you.” Wherever there is a fireside, let there be an altar; seek the blessing of God in your homes, and depend upon it that blessing will not be withheld from you. One reason why there are so many sad homes is just this, that there are so many homes in which there are no altars. One reason why there are so many undutiful children is, that no blessing has been asked by the parents on behalf of the children. Seek therefore, in your homes, “first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you.”

In short, Daniel found, what every true Christian has found, that Christian principle is the highest expediency.

LECTURE V.

BABYLON, THE GOLDEN HEAD.

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”—DANIEL ii. 37, 38.

THIS chapter records a prophecy revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, and through him, as the mere organ of utterance, to us, of what shall be the succession of the kingdoms of the world till the day when the great stone, the rock that is laid in Zion, shall grind them to powder, and there shall rise and flourish on their ruins the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. This great image is meant to be a standing symbol, representative, as Daniel explains it, of four successions of supreme and sovereign kingdoms, beginning in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. History shows that there have been just four universal kingdoms in the world, and only four; those very four which were clearly foreshadowed to the king, and explained by Daniel as the interpretation of the dream. The first supreme kingdom without a rival, was the kingdom of Babylon, or symbolically the Head of Gold; the second kingdom was the Medo-Persian, which I shall hereafter more fully explain. The third kingdom was the Macedonian, which every one knows to have been for a season universal. The fourth kingdom was divided into ten kingdoms, as the two feet of the image were divided into ten toes. These ten kingdoms, which I shall also

show to have actually existed, and the prediction thus to have been fulfilled, have tried to mingle, one or other having set up to absorb the rest and be supreme, and all, in every instance, have failed. Since the Roman empire was divided into ten kingdoms, Charlemagne has swept the world, and retired unsuccessful from the effort to make an universal sovereignty. After him, and others who might be named, Napoleon visited every land, and subjected almost every country in Europe: but just as it seemed to be within his reach to lord it over all the world, and to construct out of the ten kingdoms a new and universal sovereignty, the snow fell softly and beautifully from heaven, as the light upon an infant's eye; but those same insignificant snow-flakes formed themselves into ramparts that checked his troops, and ultimately made shrouds and graves for all his chivalry. So that we have already, in the history of the past, clear evidence that what Daniel here describes as a dream, and gives the interpretation of, was a prophecy of that which has actually occurred, so that history in its chapters sounds the echo of truth in the prophecies of God.

In looking at the introduction to this vision, and the failure of the magi to explain it, you will notice the unreasonable requirement of the king. He substantially said, "I shall not be satisfied by you astrologers giving me an interpretation of my dream; you must state what the dream itself was, and I shall thereby have proof—for it seemed as if he were a sceptic even in his own religion—I shall have proof by your thus telling me the nature of my dream, that you have a divine authority adequate to expound and unfold the substance of that dream." The magicians and astrologers made every excuse and apology: first, that the thing was uncommon; and secondly, that no king or dreamer had ever made such a requirement before, and that no wise man, or magician, or astrologer, had even explained such a thing before. At this, the king became furious, and, like all men who have great power as well as ungovernable passions, he orders them to be slain. That king is but a specimen of what unsanctified man becomes when he has

too great power. It is well that man in this world should not have absolute power. It is too awful a prerogative for him to possess in this dispensation; it never has been wielded rightly, and it never will be until man is made a new creature, and all things are become new. At present we need restraint, modifications, and limitations—constitutional laws that counterbalance the excessive weight of democracy on the one hand, and check the effects of despotism in its fury on the other, so that the machinery of government may best answer its ends. Daniel, hearing of the king's decree, went into the royal presence and begged for a little time. And why did Daniel ask time? the answer is given in the subsequent verse: he asked time in order that he might go and speak to God, and implore on bended knee his help, instruction, and guidance. And accordingly, we find him, after making his request to Arioch, "making the thing known to his companions, that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon." If we are in difficulty, the right resource is prayer. There is no question that God does answer prayer. He may not answer it in the precise way which we in our ignorance prescribe, but He will answer it in the way that is most for his glory and our good. Whatever be the nature of our trial, we are warranted in approaching God, and beseeching him to remove it; whatever be the thorn that is most poignant, we are warranted in asking God to extract it. It is no just objection to this, to say, we may be asking what is not good for us; it is not our province to determine this, but God's. It is our part to unbosom the wants of our hearts, and offer up the honest petitions of our souls, and to rest confident in this, that God will not give what would prove our present or our eternal ruin.

When Daniel had prayed to God and had received an answer to his prayers, what did he next do? He instantly returned to thank God. The man who prays sincerely in the morning will praise as sincerely at night. "Is any man afflicted? let him pray. Is any

merry? let him sing psalms." It is wrong to be Christians when we are in want of anything, and to be atheists when we have obtained it. Let us ask as Christians, and praise as Christians. Let us appeal to God for what we want; and then let us give the glory to God when we have obtained what we asked.

Daniel then goes to the king, and announces to him this great fact, that "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." And with beautiful humility he adds, "It is not because of the wisdom that is in me that I am able to make known this secret, but it is for the glory of Him who has taught me, and who is willing to do good to thee."

He next proceeds to explain to the king what he had seen in his vision—an image which is here described. He then explains what that image represented. In this Lecture I shall only be able to call your attention to "the head of gold." The text, therefore, on which I shall specially speak in this Lecture is (verses 37, 38): "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold;" plainly meaning, "thy kingdom or thy state is so."

The Church of God was now captive in Babylon. How deeply distressed was the whole of Israel at this era! The glory had departed from between the cherubim; the sons and the daughters of Judah were captives beside the Euphrates; the sacred vessels of the sanctuary were now the property of the spoiler. Their grand temple was in ruins; and "Ichabod, Ichabod," "The glory is departed," was the sad inscription too legible to the heart of every captive in Babylon. But in this state of outward depression you will notice how God compensated for all external disadvantages by special manifestations of his wisdom and his power. He showed them that he was not dependent upon outward things; that when all ordinances have passed away, the Lord of the ordinance

can take their place, and more than compensate for their absence. Is it not still often felt in the experience of the people of God, that when the outward fabric is dissolved, the inward glory, that seemed restricted to its walls, only breaks forth with greater splendour, and spreads throughout the world with greater speed? Was it not to the Church in the wilderness; to the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; to the woman who was obliged to flee from the persecuting power of the Roman apostasy, that God revealed most clearly the riches of his grace, and made known with the greatest power the manifestations of his mind and will? Often, when the visible Church is in ruins, does God construct upon its wreck a yet more glorious fane—a house not made with hands,—more beautiful than the temples of Balbec, than the cathedrals of Europe, more splendid than the theatres of Ionia, more magnificent than the temple of Solomon in all its glory. It is often when the Church has no mitre on her head, no Urim and Thummim upon her breast, that you may read most legibly the bright inscription on her brow, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” The breaking of the outward crutch makes her lean more simply upon God. The departure of the beautiful sign makes her think more of the inner and the precious substance. You will see too, in conformity with this idea, how God has ever given the greatest manifestations of his mind to sufferers. To a captive beside the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, *i. e.* to Daniel, God made known the greatest portions of his mind and will, as these were to be unfolded in future ages. To an exile and a prisoner, amid the dreary solitudes of Patmos, *i. e.* to John, God revealed that grand procession of saints, and martyrs, and kings, and dynasties, and heroes, and conquerors, the history of which is recorded in the Apocalypse, and the fulfilment of which is contained in every chapter of human history. To the men who felt they had nothing upon earth, did God make known most plainly how much they had in heaven. To the eye that was shut upon all the splendours of time, did God disclose in the

greatest fulness the glories of eternity. And just as God made known most of his mind to those who were most separate from the world, he will also discover most of the meaning of his word to those who are least bound up with the cares, the anxieties, the pomps, and the vanities of this present life.

The first thing that occurred, when God was about to reveal to Daniel his purposes, was the silencing of the wisdom of man. These magicians owned their ignorance before God revealed his wisdom. It is thus that God shows the wisdom of man to be folly, in order that the wise man may not glory in wisdom; and the strength of man to be but weakness, in order that the strong man may not glory in his strength. In the case of the Egyptian magicians he showed the weakness of human power; in the case of the Chaldean magicians he taught the ignorance of human wisdom; and in both cases he led prince and people from the broken cisterns to the divine and original fount.

The four empires, as I have already explained, are the Babylonian, the Persian, the Græco-Macedonian, and the Roman empires; and the last, the empire of the stone cut out without hands, represents the empire of the Gospel.

The first kingdom, then, here represented by the head of gold, was that of Babylon. Let me just briefly notice what is said about it in the word of God, and in what respects that which was prophesied of it has been fulfilled. You will always perceive that one kingdom passes from the stage the moment that the other comes on. In other words, the Persian kingdom was constructed from the ruins of the Babylonian; the Græco-Macedonian was constructed from the ruins of the Persian; and the Roman kingdom rose upon the ruins of all that preceded it.

About 612 years B.C. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Nineveh; or, in the language of Scripture, as shown to be true by the disclosures of Layard, "made its grave;" burying in the deep and silent earth all its grandeur, its pomp, and its splendour. And when Nineveh, till

that time the greatest kingdom upon earth, was thus entombed in its grave, Babylon ascended the throne, and swayed the sceptre over all the nations of the world. The walls of the city of Babylon, as we read not only in Scripture, but in Xenophon, the beautiful and classic Greek historian, were of gigantic size, measuring sixty miles in circumference; and the breadth of these walls, which were very solid, being built of brick cemented with bitumen, a substance produced upon the soil, were capable of allowing six chariots, each with two horses, to drive abreast upon them. The city had 100 gates of solid brass. The temple of Bel, or of Belus, as it is called by classic writers, had a circumference of half a mile, and was upwards of one thousand feet in height, or nearly three times the height of St. Paul's cathedral. The fertility of the whole region of Chaldea, watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates, was so great that classical historians, Herodotus and Strabo, tell us that it produced two hundredfold; *i.e.* that one seed of corn, if I may use this mode of illustration, produced in the ear 200 seeds; a degree of fertility unrivalled in any modern country. This I state to justify the description of the prophet, when he calls Babylon "the excellency of Chaldea," and literally, "the glory of kingdoms." Again, what is the sign of it in Nebuchadnezzar's dream? "The head of gold;" in its natural and physical properties the most valuable of the four metals.

In order to show you the descriptions given of it by other prophets of God, I refer to the prophet Jeremiah, who thus speaks of it in chap. xxvii. 5—8: "I have made the earth, the man, and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that

the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the King of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand." You have in these words the investiture of the King of Babylon with universal sovereignty: in other words, "the empire of the head of gold," in all its magnificence; characterised by unrivalled fertility, wielding a dominion superior to that of the nations around, with no limits but the will and the power of the monarch. We then find that the head of gold passes away, to give place to an empire rising from its ruins, only less magnificent than the former. And in order to show how truly history is the echo of prophecy, I will quote the predictions of the downfall of Babylon, and then adds the facts of its ruin as those facts are recorded by Xenophon, Strabo, and Herodotus, the heathen historians.

I will give, I say, first of all the predictions of God, as these were uttered many years before its fall, and then I will read the facts recorded in history by impartial writers who did not even know of the prophecy, and who could not have the least design or intention of showing its fulfilment. The first passage to which I refer is Jer. xxv. 11, 12, and this is a summary of all that follows, where God says, "This whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." You recollect I showed you the prophecy that all nations should serve him, and here you read what is to follow: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the King of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." The captivity of the Jews in Babylon was to last seventy years: and just while their punishment lasted, the prosperity of Babylon was to last, and no longer. I will now direct your attention to Isaiah xiii., "The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos did see;" and I

will read such verses only as apply immediately to the subject before us. At verse 4,—and I will thank you to notice the very words used by the prophet, because the evidence of the inspiration of these prophets will be rendered the more plain by your observing how minutely each prediction has been fulfilled,—“The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man’s heart shall melt. And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.” Then, verse 17, “Behold, I will stir up the Medes,”—the very name of the nation which was to destroy them is specified—“which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation;” and the prophecy grows more specific: “Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.” Then at chap. xiv. 4,

“Thou shalt take up this proverb against the King of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!” Then, (verse 11,) “thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.” Verse 15, “Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.” Verse 19, “Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch.” Verse 22, “I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord.” Then chap. xlvi. 27, —recollect that God is predicting here the destruction of Babylon, and the mode in which that destruction should be effected, though seventy years and upwards before anything of the kind had taken place,—“That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus,”—before Cyrus was born,—“He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid;” giving a prophecy of the rise of Jerusalem, emerging from the ruins of Babylon.

I then call your attention to Jer. 1. “The word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.” Again, verse 9, “For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord.” Again, at verses 12, 13, “Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed:

behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues." Again, at verses 15, 16, "Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land." Again, at verses 24—26, "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord. The Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left." Again, in chap. li. verse 35, "The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say." And lastly, verse 47, "Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her."

Then, once more, turn to chap. li. ver. 36: "Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." And again, ver. 37, "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant." And again, ver. 39, "In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord." And again, ver. 41, "How is Sheshach

taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!" Ver. 44, "And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall." And again, ver. 46, 47, "And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her."

I have thus read the leading parts of that great burden of prophecy against Babylon. I now quote in evidence of the fulfilment of these the prophecies of God, the dispassionate testimony of the heathen historians: and I shall then give you an account not only of the rise, as I have already briefly done, but also of the fall, of the head of gold, previous to the silver empire taking its place, and its order in succession onward to the end.

First, then, in these prophecies, Cyrus is specified as the general who was to march his forces against Babylon. Xenophon directly states that such was the fact. Babylon, trusting in its gigantic walls, and in its provisions for twenty years, adequate to maintain it in case of its being besieged, instead of preparing to repel the invading army, gave itself, its whole population, from the prince upon the throne down to the meanest of his subjects, to debauchery, riot, profligacy, and drunkenness. In the next place, Cyrus, after he had come in array against Babylon, besieged it for years without success, and at last fell upon the expedient of digging trenches round the walls of Babylon, ostensibly for blockade, but really to divert the waters of the Euphrates from their accustomed course, and leave in the empty channel a pathway for his soldiers to march into the city. It was, as I have described, surrounded by vast walls; but the river Euphrates rolled through the midst of it. There was therefore an opening

thus formed through the centre of the city; only there were walls upon each side, or on each bank of the river, with gates to each street leading down to it; and the plan of Cyrus was therefore to divert the waters of the Euphrates into the trenches he had dug, and to make the dry central channel a road for his troops to march down in order to gain possession of the city. Herodotus, the father of historians, relates that, even after having marched along the bed of the river, the obstacles to his entrance were just as great as elsewhere; for there were gates to each street leading to the banks of the river; and if these had been secured, the obstruction to the entrance of Cyrus would have been complete. But there was a prophecy—part of which I read to you—that these gates should not be shut; and the Babylonians, not suspecting the stratagem of Cyrus in diverting the waters of the river, left their gates open as if in conscious possession of impregnable security; when part of the army, therefore, entered at one side of the city, marching up the bed of the river, and another part of his troops at the other side of the city, marching down the bed of the river, they found each of these gates open, which would not have been the case had not the people been indulging in feasting and drunkenness; the troops therefore entered by every gate; and before the Babylonians were aware that the enemy was so near at hand, their great and impregnable capital was in the hands of the next empire, the empire of the Persians.

We notice another minute point that was singularly fulfilled. It was predicted that the enemy should come upon them unawares, and that “one post should run to meet another in the midst of the siege.” Now, that such was literally the fact is recorded by Herodotus, for he says that those at one end of the city were in the hands of Cyrus before those at the other end of the city were aware of his attack, and before they had time to give the alarm; thus fulfilling the prediction of the prophet, that post should run to post, and watchman to watchman, to give the awful and startling alarm that the forces of Cyrus were upon them.

Then it is predicted by the prophet, that "they that were drunken should sleep a perpetual sleep;" and that "the two-leaved gates should be thrown open." It is stated by the historian that the monarch was indulging in a feast, and was intoxicated with wine, surrounded by all his princes, nobles, and courtiers, at the very moment when the city had fallen into the hands of the Persian army; and hearing a noise outside the palace, he insisted on knowing what it was; and when some of the chief princes rushed to the gates of the palace in order to ascertain the cause, and threw them open for that purpose, they thus fulfilled the prophecy,—the troops of Cyrus instantly rushed in, and Belshazzar and his princes were slaughtered in the midst of their festival: "the drunken slept a perpetual sleep." Thus you have every prediction that God gave by the mouth of Isaiah and Jeremiah fulfilled to the very letter: and that fulfilment is recorded by the dispassionate pens of the historians of Ancient Greece.

I shall now quote a few short extracts from the works of modern travellers, in order to show how complete the ruin of Babylon has been, and how minutely each prophecy has been fulfilled. For these last I am mainly indebted to Dr. Keith's useful work on the fulfilment of prophecy. Porter, in his Travels, states that "mounds of temples and palaces were everywhere visible;" "a vast succession of mounds of ruins is all that now remains of Babylon." What Porter saw when he visited the spot had been foretold of God, when he prophesied that nothing should be left. Richards, when he visited it, found that "vast heaps constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon; there are no inhabitants." God had declared, "It shall never be inhabited." Keppel, another traveller, who visited the same spot, says, "Babylon is spurned by the heel of the Ottoman, the Israelite, and the sons of Ishmael." God had said beforehand, "The Arab shall not pitch his tent there." This is the more remarkable, because the Arabs are a nomadic race, wanderers that are found in almost every place where they can find temporary shelter or provender for their cattle:

and Captain Mignon relates, that when he reached the spot, accompanied by six Arabs, he could not induce them to remain all night among the ruins, because, they alleged, the place was haunted. Buckingham, another traveller, says, "All the people of the country assert that it is dangerous to approach the mounds of Babylon on account of the multitude of evil spirits that dwell among them." Man's excuse may arise from superstition; but the result is, the accomplishment of the ancient prophecy,—“The Arab shall not pitch his tent there.”

We have thus seen, then, the rise, the magnificence, and the fall of Babylon; and in it we have seen God's word completely fulfilled. God's word is more powerful than princes; more enduring than dynasties: it moves softly and silently, yet surely, to victory; turning obstacles into impulses, and obstructions into facilities, until it shall appear enthroned upon the ruins of the kingdoms of this world, and become the glory and the praise of the ransomed people of God.

We may here observe how transient is human greatness! The great walls of Babylon, on which, as we read, six chariots could ride abreast, are no more. Its magnificent temple, which caught the first rays of the rising sun, and reflected the last beams of the setting sun,—the palace in which the choicest wines were drunk, and the sacred vessels of the sanctuary were profaned,—are gone; the golden head is buried in the dust; the hum of its mighty population is silenced. The Arab ventures not to pitch his tent there; and the owl, hooting amid the broken ruins, seems to attest how perishable is all that man calls great!—how lasting is all that God pronounces true!

The duration of Babylon's power, you notice, in the next place, was specified to be seventy years. It was destined to last only till it had accomplished God's purposes. The kingdom is ours; and its duration we fancy that we are able to control. It is not so. We are in the hands of God, and the times and the seasons are all specified by Him. The King of Babylon thought he had

raised a great empire for his glory: in reality, he had built a school-house in which God was the teacher; a prison-house in which He was to punish his people for a season on account of their iniquities. And as soon as the work appointed of God had been accomplished, the "glory of the Chaldees' excellency" departs, "the golden head" falls, and the great empire is at an end.

As its end drew near, Daniel, in clearer terms, as I shall show from the sequel of the prophecy, came to predict its ruin. From this a most able and talented writer on the Prophecies of Daniel, Mr. Birks, the son-in-law of the venerable Mr. Bickersteth,* argues, that we may expect that, as God revealed by his prophets more clearly—for Daniel states that he "knew *by books*" the number and the date of the seventy years—the time when the captivity should be ended, so, as we draw near to the end of this dispensation, he will make more clear,

* It is difficult to overstate the loss which the Church of Christ on earth has sustained by the removal of this eminent, excellent, Christian, and Protestant minister.

He was ever ready to aid, by his advocacy, the cause of truth; liberal, yet not latitudinarian; a zealous contender for the faith, and yet never betrayed into bitterness of feeling or violence of speech. He loved his Church, but he loved Christianity still more. No man was so tenacious of essential truth, yet none rejoiced more than he did in the company of the good and faithful of every name. He possessed great clearness of mind, and yet greater warmth of heart; earnest and unwearied advocacy of truth; a walk unimpeachable before the severest censor, and beautiful, because truly apprehended by the people of God.

Every Christian that knew him loved him. Even his enemies—the enemies of truth—hesitated to select Mr. Bickersteth as the object of vituperation, or satire, or assault, well aware, that in their selection of one so widely revered, their attack would recoil upon themselves far sooner than in the case of other and more easily vulnerable champions of truth.

His removal at a crisis when his life and counsel were so singularly needed is to us inexplicable. Perhaps it is judgment beginning at the house of God, and thus his gain may be not only our loss but our punishment. Very soon he will come with his coming Lord, and such of us as may be alive will meet the sublime procession in the air, and our separation, so widely and bitterly bewailed, will render our meeting again, where separations are unknown, more glorious. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

intelligible, and distinct, the years that number the times of the Gentiles.

We must not suppose there was anything strange in God's revealing this to a heathen prince, and through the medium of what appears to us so common and trivial a thing as a dream. To Abraham, Moses, and Job, God spoke face to face; but in general he revealed future events by means of dreams. And he himself declares, "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision, and will speak unto him in dreams." Jacob was promised his patrimony in a dream. In a dream the Lord appeared to Solomon, and bade him ask what he wished. In a dream Pharaoh was warned of the famine that was about to visit Egypt: and from some traditional recollections of these facts arises the popular belief, that that which is about to come to pass is sometimes revealed to men in dreams. It may be so. There is no reason to conclude that God does not come into closer contact with the human mind than many are disposed to believe; only you are not to read Providence and Scripture in the light of your dream; you are to read your dream in the light of Scripture. If in a dream anything seems revealed to you contrary to Scripture, it is not from God; if it be consistent with Scripture, it is from God. But recollect, you live not by what you dream, but by what you read in God's Holy Word. Any one that adds to that Word, to him shall be added its curses; any one that subtracts from it, from him shall be subtracted the promises revealed in it.

In the next place, is there not in the destruction of Babylon a foreshadow of what shall be the end of this dispensation? Cyrus burst upon Babylon whilst its princes and its people were feasting and revelling; and so in the period that immediately precedes our Lord's advent it will be asked, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." I believe, that only God's people will be taught to anticipate that blessed day, that glorious epoch. They alone

will be found resting, by retrospective faith, upon that perfect sacrifice, which speaks better things than the blood of Abel; their eyes stretching through the vista of the future, to catch the rays of the approaching sun, which shall rise and shine from his meridian throne to set no more.

To those that look for him, "he will appear the second time without sin unto salvation." May we not believe, that we have in the destruction of the literal Babylon a type and foreshadowing of what will be the destruction of that Babylon of which it was the prototype, and with whose destruction the Apocalypse is so fully and unmistakeably charged? It is there stated that "her plagues shall come" upon Babylon "in one day, death, and mourning, and famine." You recollect my endeavouring to show you what the future prospects of Rome are. My belief always was, that the Pontiff would be replaced on his throne; but, along with that, the clear indications of the prophetic word seem to be, that by his attempts to assert a supremacy that is God's, and to wield a sceptre from which the prestige and the glory seem to be gone for ever, he should precipitate on himself only a more terrible and consuming catastrophe.

But Babylon has passed away; and modern Babylon will pass away too. Where, however, are we? and what shall we do when the crash and desolation of the last hour comes? Is our citizenship in heaven? Are our hearts and pleasures beyond the skies? Are we travelling upon our road in practical obedience to the text—"Be ye not conformed to this world?" Are we walking amid these dark shadows that are creeping over the surface of the whole earth, as pilgrims and strangers, "looking for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God?" Does the dissolution of the kingdoms of the world, the breaking up of ancient establishments and hoary dynasties, the heaving of all things, Church and State both together, as if some terrible subterranean forces were pressing upwards and ready every moment to explode and leave all in ruins, affect us? Are we leaning and trusting upon these things? Are

we thinking of our wealth, our rank, our property, our sect, our church, our party, more than we are thinking of Christ? Are we looking for the Lord? Does the night of approaching doom only warn us to prepare for the glorious jubilee that shall follow? "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and with the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares!" May He add his blessing, and to his name be the praise. Amen.

LECTURE VI.

THE MEDO-PERSIAN AND GRÆCO-MACEDONIAN EMPIRES.

“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.”—DANIEL ii. 39.

THIS is part of the explanation of the vision seen by Nebuchadnezzar. He saw a great image, of which we read at verse 31, that this great image “stood before him, whose brightness was excellent, and the form thereof was terrible.” The head of this image was of fine gold, “his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.” And the king saw until “a stone cut out without hands smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” This was the dream; and then follows the interpretation:—“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.” This was the first kingdom. Then the second kingdom, which is likened to the breast and the arms of silver, is described in verse 39: “And after thee shall arise another kingdom

inferior to thee." And then the third universal kingdom is represented by the image having "the belly and the thighs of brass," and is described as "another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." And of the fourth kingdom, "the legs of iron," it is predicted: "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise."

Now, I explained before, that in all the records of history there have been but four supreme, universal, absolute monarchies from the beginning; the first being that of Babylon, the sceptre of which extended over all the nations that were then known, and the sovereignty of which was undisputed, as it was impossible to oppose it. Such was the first, or the head of gold. In my last, I showed its rise, its national grandeur, its decay, and its utter destruction before the armies of Cyrus: we now find that another kingdom was to arise inferior to Babylon, just as the silver is inferior to the gold; of greater territorial dimensions, but of less national splendour and magnificence. The twofold character that is here indicated—for every symbol in the Bible has its counterpart in history and in fact—viz. its having the breast and the two arms stretching out from it of silver, instantly suggests the historic fact that Cyrus was the monarch, that Media was one arm, and Persia the other; these being two component parts of the kingdom of Cyrus, he being the tie that knit the two realms into one. Persia was the one realm, and Media the other; the latter absorbed by the former, and both, like two arms, joined together in Cyrus, who inspired them with their vigour, wielded their energies with success, and established their empire from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. You have then, in Media and Persia, or, as it is called in history, the Medo-Persian universal sovereignty, the fulfilment, years after Daniel wrote, of the symbol shown to Nebuchadnezzar, and of the prediction unfolded by Daniel; and thus the coincidence between the prophecy and the fact is entire.

But that you may see how truly what I state is confirmed by history, I shall quote two sentences—I might quote many, but I will confine myself to two of the most striking—the one from Herodotus, “the father of history,” who says, in describing the empire of Cyrus, “Wherever Cyrus marched throughout the earth, it was impossible for the nations to escape him;” and the other from Xenophon, who, in his *Cyropædia*, which, literally translated, means, the “instruction,” or “bringing-up,” of Cyrus, and with which every school-boy is more or less familiar—(here I may mention by the way is one object in teaching young men the classics, or the learning of the Greeks and Romans; such knowledge confirms and demonstrates to mankind the veracity and authenticity of the writers of the word of God)—Xenophon, then, in his *Cyropædia*, thus describes the universality of the sovereignty of Cyrus: “He ruled the Medes, subverted the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Arabians, the Cappadocians, the Phrygians, the Lydians, the Carians, the Babylonians, the Indians, the Phœnicians, the Greeks in Asia, the Cyprians, the Egyptians, and struck all with such dread and terror, that none ventured to assail him. He subdued from his throne east, west, north, and south.” You have thus the heathen historian leaving behind him those recorded facts, which form the brightest comment upon the breast and the two arms of silver, or the second universal monarchy, which during its existence subdued and reigned over the whole earth. After its disappearance, we have a third empire, which is symbolised by “the belly and the thighs of brass.” This was the symbol that Nebuchadnezzar saw, and the interpretation of it by Daniel is, “a third universal sovereignty.”

Now show me, from the days of Cyrus downwards to the commencement of Rome, any other empire, either from history or from any source whatever, that can be called universal—I mean, extending over the whole known world,—except the Græco-Macedonian empire of Alexander the Great. He and his father Philip, King of Macedon, against whom Demosthenes so eloquently

harangued, subdued the Medo-Persians, and finally and ultimately all the provinces of the habitable globe. This third monarchy was of brass; making up in strength what it lost in value; in glare and apparent splendour what it lost in real and substantial merit. But it also was divided, you find, into two great provinces, which, from their position, formed the lower or supporting parts of the empire. Accordingly, we ascertain from history, that Syria and Egypt, the lower parts of the empire, were divided; and on these the colossal image, or empire of Alexander, rested. It was about 334 years before Christ that Alexander began his expedition against Persia, the second universal empire. He overthrew the silver monarchy, just as it had overthrown the golden monarchy of Nebuchadnezzar; and by the great battle of Arbela, which was fought about 331 years before Christ, he established his own undisputed supremacy. It arose upon the ruins of Babylon and Persia, fed its strength from their wreck, and stretched out a sceptre more powerful than either, till Alexander the Great, when he had overthrown the wide world, leaving like a wilderness behind, what he had found to be the garden of the Lord before him, sat down and wept like a child, because, the whole world being subdued, there was no other place to conquer and attach to his empire.

You have, then, in the Græco-Macedonian empire the fulfilment of that portion of the image which represented the third universal sovereignty that occupied the whole world. In looking at this part of my subject, there is just one thing more I should like to notice. The period that comprehended the Medo-Persian and the Græco-Macedonian empires, or the second and third universal monarchies, was, perhaps, the most brilliant in the world. The galaxy of heroes, poets, painters, orators, statesmen, historians, that shine in the firmament of that celebrated era, has perhaps never been equalled in brilliancy and beauty. But what I wish you to notice is, that whilst this period occupied all the attention of the historians, the poets, and the orators of Greece and Rome, and is referred to by them as the

brightest and most illustrious in the history of the world, how little space it occupies in the word of God!

During the course of these empires, we have the conquests of Cyrus, the expedition of Xerxes—Marathon, the name of which is almost an oration—Thermopylæ, which is the burden of so many poets' songs—and Salamis. We have Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles, and Demosthenes; in short, all that man can appreciate of earthly glory reached at this period its culminating grandeur, and has commanded in every land the admiration of poets, and the reminiscences of historians; but these events, so prominent in the records of man, are but feebly touched by the pencil of the Spirit of God. Great warriors—able orators—mighty poets—illustrious statesmen—are treated in the Bible as the grass that groweth up and the flower of the grass that fadeth; and great truths, interwoven with man's everlasting well-being, are alone prominent in the word of God that liveth and endureth for ever and ever. But while these fade like the grass, and their greatest ones as the flower of the grass, the same book teaches us that "they that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Man's history relates to his own heroes and victories, and these occupy all his pages; God's history relates to and describes man in the light of eternity, and views all things as they bear upon that momentous issue.

These, then, were the second and third empires; and in verse 40 we have the fourth empire in its undivided state. "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron," &c. This empire can be proved from history to be none other than the great Roman empire itself. From the period when Alexander swept the world and made it the measure of his kingdom, to the period when Rome gained the ascendancy and became the universal empire, we read of no other universal, supreme, and absorbing sovereignty. We find from history that the Macedonian empire, which I have described, was overthrown about 142 years before Christ. Syria was conquered 64 years before Christ; Egypt 30 years before; and this vast

empire then began its course about 30 years, or, at the very remotest, 142 years before Christ, and continued until nearly 400 years after that period, the alone supreme and universal empire. One may also see that this the judgment formed by modern commentators was the universal judgment of the earliest writers upon the word of God. Theodoret, a Greek father, states, that the first empire, of gold, was the Babylonian; the second, of silver, was the Medo-Persian; the third, of brass, the Græco-Macedonian; and the fourth, or iron empire, he says, was none else than the Roman empire itself.

You must notice, in looking at this prophecy of Daniel, that more space is devoted to the history of the Roman empire than to that of any of the other three. A large space is devoted to Babylon; but a much larger space in the Bible relates to the Roman empire. Why so? The Roman soldiers were present at the crucifixion; a Roman officer was the first among the Gentiles to receive the Gospel; the Roman Capitol was the pulpit of Paul; the Roman people became the first converts to the Gospel; through the Roman language and by Roman roads the Gospel was carried from the Capitol to the remotest regions of the habitable globe; and on the ruins of the Roman empire was constructed that dread sacerdotal despotism which has corrupted the oracles of God, ruined the souls of mankind, and is now drunk, as I shall show you in a subsequent lecture, with the blood of the saints of God—I mean the Romish Church.

Now, in showing the rise of the Roman universal empire, we notice, first, Macedon was conquered, and disappeared from occupying its place among the nations of the earth; Carthage was razed to the ground; Corinth, the capital of all that was luxurious and refined, was reduced to ashes. Spain next fell before the victorious arms of Rome; Egypt was reduced to a Roman province; Judea became part of the Roman empire, as the New Testament will show you; and Jerusalem itself, the capital of Judea, was torn up by the Roman ploughshare, under Titus and Vespasian, the Roman emperors. When

Rome had thus, like iron, bruised and broken down all the nations of the earth, and reduced them under its iron sceptre, this island, a small spot in the midst of the deep—a country full of roving savages and wild barbarians—a race that knew not what civilisation was, and had still less idea of what Christianity proclaimed—this distant isle of the sea provoked the cupidity and stirred the ambition of Rome; at length it was invaded, and likewise subjected to the rule of the Roman empire. It was when the Romans had reached Scotland, and were subduing a portion of it, that Galgacus, the celebrated chieftain, addressed the Caledonians in the following words, which show how truly Rome was at this moment become the universal sovereign:—“These ravagers of the world,” said the Scottish chieftain, “after all the earth has been too narrow for their ambition, have ransacked the sea also. If their enemy be rich, they are covetous; if poor, they are ambitious. The East cannot satiate them, no more can the West. To plunder, to murder, to rob, is all their delight. Violence they call dominion; and wherever they make a dreary solitude, they call it peace.” But the most decisive testimony to the universal iron supremacy of Rome, the fourth empire of Daniel, is given by Gibbon, who, as usual, is here the undesigning, the unconscious, but the faithful witness to the truth of the prophecies of God. Gibbon thus speaks of the extent of the Roman dominions:—“The empire was about two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antonius and northern limits of Dacia to the Atlas and the tropic of Cancer. It extended in length more than three thousand miles, from the Western ocean to the Euphrates. The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid strides to the Euphrates, and the Danube, and the Rhine, and the ocean; and the image of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations or kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.”

Thus, strange enough, Gibbon states, as if he could find no language so truly descriptive of historic fact as

the language of Daniel, "The image of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations or kings, was successively broken up by the iron monarchy of Rome;" so completely does God's prophecy find its echo in man's unconscious history. In other words, the infidel historian could find no language so descriptive of fact as the very words of prophecy in the book of Daniel; and thus he proved, not only the fulfilment of prophecy, but the fulness, the beauty, and the force of the words in which that prophecy was couched.

This iron despotism or empire is further proved to be the fourth universal empire, by another extract which I will give from Gibbon. "There was," says the historian, "not an inch of ground then known exempt from its sceptre. The modern tyrant who should find no resistance in his own breast, or in his people, would soon experience a gentle restraint from the example of his equals, the dread of censure, the apprehension of enemies. The object of his displeasure escaping the narrow limits of his dominion, would easily obtain, in a happier climate, a secure refuge, freedom of complaint, and, perhaps, means of revenge. But the empire of the Romans filled the world, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse, without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers, he could discover nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, and hostile tribes of fierce barbarians."

Gibbon is my witness that the fourth kingdom should be "strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things, so shall it break in pieces and bruise." Thus truly is history the echo of prophecy! God sketches the outline in his word, and kings, and heroes, and poets, and painters, and historians, as if smitten with some mysterious instinct, instantly rise to their places, and fill up with their details what God has so fully sketched.

Now then, having looked at the evidence of the existence of four great empires, I ask, can any one doubt, in reading their history, that the prophecy which predicted that existence hundreds of years before, is inspired by the Holy Spirit of God? Can we doubt, from the comparison of the prophecy so plain with the historic facts, so indisputable and so clearly established, that there is a God who revealed them, and does reveal secrets still? Can we suppose that that man was uninspired by Him to whom the present and the future are equally clear, who could stand up in the midst of the Babylonian empire, when its grandeur and power seemed the prophecy of its immortality, and the sceptre of its monarchy a sceptre too strong for any rival to destroy, or for any foe to shatter;—can we suppose that Daniel, standing under such circumstances, in the midst of such imperial magnificence, and predicting that this empire should pass away, and a second should speedily occupy its throne; and that that second empire should also fade, and a third should take its place; and that a fourth empire should arise, fiercer and more powerful than the three that preceded it, and, like iron, irresistibly tread down and subdue to its supremacy all the nations of the habitable globe;—could he, I say, have done all this, if he had not been inspired by a power far greater than any human foresight could bestow? If God be in history, which we know to be the fact, is there not God in prophecy? and history, therefore, is but the echo resounding in the ears of the present generation of that voice which sounded along the corridors of time in centuries and generations long past.

We notice, then, the sublime and yet humbling light in which all the heroes and statesmen of ancient days were thus unconsciously placed. We see Hannibal, who had never heard of God's prophecies, begin his wars with Rome, and train her soldiers for being the conquerors of the world. We see Scipio, Marius, Pompey, and Cæsar, each take up the position assigned to him, and fight, or fall, or conquer, till they have made Rome nothing less and nothing more than what Daniel pre-

dicted that Rome should become. Thus we see the eloquence of Cicero, the poetry of Virgil, the odes of Horace, the annals of Tacitus, the pungent satires of Juvenal, the history of Gibbon, rush forward and become the witnesses to mysterious truths, which they could not themselves comprehend, but which are the most conclusive proofs that Daniel spoke by the inspiration of God, and the demonstrations to a sceptic world that God changeth the times and the seasons, he removeth kings and setteth up kings, he knoweth what is in the darkness and in the light, he revealeth the deep and secret things, and the light dwelleth with him. All these fell into their places just at the appointed times, and whilst they thought they were doing each his own work, all were co-operating to accomplish God's predictions; whilst they thought they were the statuaries cutting out the image after their own design, they were but the chisels in the hand of the great Statuary, unconsciously and unintentionally fulfilling his own grand and sublime purposes.

In the next place, we learn the lesson that there are no accidents on earth—all history is thus constantly fulfilling all prophecy. If you read attentively the history of Rome, you would see that at times it seemed almost to struggle for existence. At one time it depended, you would say, upon the turning of a straw, whether Remus and Romulus, the alleged founders of Rome, should be left to perish in the wilderness; it rested, you would say, at another time, upon the single sword of Camillus, which scale should preponderate; and once the Capitol of the city was saved by the geese which were accidentally fed there. All these seem to man accidents; and human history, read by human light, seems a collection of lucky and fortuitous occurrences. But when a Christian looks at history, it becomes all luminous in the light of the Gospel. The sword of Camillus was chosen and calculated by God as plainly as any fact in history; the birds that saved the Capitol had their mission by the appointment of God; and soldier and senator, poet and orator, had each his work to do, that God's great plans might be completed, and God's great work might be done.

In the next place, we may learn that what was true of Rome, who fulfilled her portion of prophecy, is no less true of Great Britain, which is fulfilling hers. We see around us conflict, and trouble, and exaction, and dismay; and we are sometimes prone to tremble, as if the glorious issue were placed in jeopardy. Save yourselves that feeling; you need not tremble. Man's word does fail, and he that builds on it may tremble; but God's word endureth for ever, and heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle of this book shall not fail till all be fulfilled. And therefore, when I look around me in this great land of ours, and see all things, consciously or unconsciously, criminally or innocently, doing God's work—the illustrious Wellington in the field—the great Pitt in the senate—the invincible Nelson on the deck—the martyrdom or the murder, call it which you please, of Charles—the ascendancy of Cromwell—the reign even of George the Fourth, and the pure and beautiful sway of her who now wields the sceptre of this mighty land,—I discover that all are equally helping the purpose, and accomplishing the predictions of God; I rest in the Lord, and am still. In the narratives of Scott—the poetry of Byron—the socialism of Owen—the piety of Wilberforce—the atheism of Voltaire—the vulgar infidelity of Paine—the pantheism of Emerson—the “pamphlets for the last days of Carlyle,”—all of them, whatever be their virtues or their crimes, whatever be their falsehood or their truth, whatever be their folly or their wisdom, are rising on the stage, each trampling down the other in its turn, to fulfil the purposes and manifest the glorious predictions of God. Their freedom and their responsibility are untouched; the direction and the effect of all they say and do, is clear as the stars in the firmament. Thus centuries have their mission and their duty to perform—moments have their work—all men their places; and the most wicked, like a leech applied to the human body, seek to serve themselves, but are only doing the work of the great Physician who prescribes, controls, and governs them.

The next lesson we learn from this survey is, that God

is also in the world. The world is not an orb abandoned by the Deity, and left to traverse its own course, or to follow its own impulses. Society is not like raindrops sprinkled in the field or on the pavement, without design, without cohesion or purpose; but they are all under God's providential government; and God is as much in the midst of this great city as he was between the cherubim when his glory dazzled all eyes by its splendour, or when he revealed himself in the burning bush, or when he thundered upon the heights of Sinai. Our creed is not "God was," but "God is." The leaf that falls from the tree, and the king that is struck from his throne,—the storm that sweeps the broad earth, and the tide of war, revolution, and convulsion that desolates great kingdoms, are all responses to the touch of God—missionaries, consciously or unconsciously, criminally or innocently, executing and fulfilling the everlasting purposes of Him whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth for ever and ever.

In the next place, let us learn from the survey of these four kingdoms, the downward and deteriorating tendency of all society, and nations, and corporations of all sorts, if they are without religion. They begin with gold; they go on to silver; they deteriorate into brass; and lastly, they end in iron. And when the strongest has developed itself, a stone, physically weak, as I shall show in future lectures, but morally omnipotent, touches the iron that has subdued all, and it is scattered like chaff upon the threshing-floor. Let us learn this great lesson, that true religion is the sweetener and the strengthener of society. Exhaust religion from a country, from its schools, and its churches, and you exhaust the vital oxygen from the nation's air. It is only when the altars of a country burn with holy fire that the intellect of a country shall glow with pure and increasing light. It is just in proportion as religion leavens a nation that that nation stands firm on its feet, and may smile at the wear and tear of ages, knowing that it has immortality in proportion as it has Christianity. Babylon perished, because it had no religion. The Medo-Persian

empire perished, because it had no religion. The Græco-Macedonian empire perished, because it had no religion; and the Roman empire perished, because it had no religion. And if you look around at the present day, you find Egypt, because without religion, is a mere mummy; Greece, because without religion, is dead; India, because without religion, is a moral desert; China, because without religion, is a stagnant morass; and all society, domestic, national, provincial, universal, if stripped and deprived of its religion, becomes like a rope of sand, held together by political compression, but the instant that the politics tremble, that instant all its institutions go to decay. And this explains what has taken place on the continent of Europe. Why is France dying every day, so that one of its most illustrious writers has written an essay on the deterioration of France; in which he shows that it is becoming daily so depopulated that they are obliged even to lower every succeeding year the standard of its army, till at length they will become pigmies instead of giants, as the Gauls once were? Its moral state too is of the most awful description. And why is it thus sinking and deteriorating? Because, as a nation, it has cast off God. And why is Prussia, as a nation, weak and disturbed? Because Prussian Protestantism has ceased to be what Luther left it. And why is it that Spain has a population above the soil not one whit grander or more capable of noble deeds than those that sleep quietly beneath it? Because it has no real religion. And why is Rome the by-word of the nations—its infallibility a scoff, and its sacerdotal dynasty the horror of all that are acquainted with its terrible secrets? Because it has no religion. You can raise a country's intellect only by raising its people's conscience. The bulwarks and the battlements of a land are not soldiers, nor sailors, nor creed, nor politics; it is righteousness that exalteth a nation, and sin that is the ruin of any people.

But we have another lesson to learn from this: if all the movements of society are thus the executors of the purposes of God, it becomes the Christian to study what is going on around him, as well as what is written in

the Bible. Christians are apt to exclude themselves from society, and to be ignorant of it; to be acquainted with the Bible, which is their greatest glory, but to be criminally and injuriously ignorant of all that is around them fulfilling the Bible, which is the neglect of their plainest duty. It seems to me that at the present moment, when, as I believe, the stone cut out without hands is breaking the kingdoms of the world into atoms—at this moment, it seems to me, that the first study should be the book of grace—the chiefest, deepest, most solemn, most prayerful; but the next to that the study of God's providential dealings at the present hour. So that, in my humble judgment, the very newspaper at this time is to me of no mean importance; and if you want to see the Bible, which is prophecy, reflected in the form of history, just read the foreign correspondence of the newspapers of every day. We see there the world commenting upon what God has written; and God, in his Providential history, showing us the truth of his ancient and inspired prophecy. But do not read the newspaper to the neglect of the Bible: read the Bible first and last, and chiefest; and use the newspaper only as you would use any one fact in the past or present, as the evidence that God speaks in the Bible, and that God now acts in the world. The Bible is the key that unlocks all: it is the torch carried into the otherwise dark chambers of history, showing us order in apparent confusion; revealing harmony in seeming discord; unity, design, in what is otherwise inexplicable. Thus it becomes the bright chart that helps us to tread with certainty the windings of the labyrinth; and to rise from the chaos in which men plunge and speculate, to the light in which God is, and lives for ever.

All around, I add, is changing; but the word of God lives and abides for ever. Thrones and dynasties and kings are passing away, but God's word remains; and in the midst of all the vicissitudes and changes that are constantly occurring around us, how delightful to know that there are added day by day to the Church of the living God such as shall be saved. I believe that, day

by day, religion is becoming more felt and appreciated. I believe too, what you know, that empires may be shattered—sceptres broken—thrones convulsed—but that little thing, in the world's eye so weak, according to the world's calculation so perishing, the company of God's faithful people, may seem buried in the waves like the ark of old, but it is only to rise with the next billow nearer to the skies. "I give unto them," says our Lord, "eternal life, and none shall be able to pluck them out of my hand." Nothing shall separate a living Christian from the living God; neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature. Brethren, are we such Christians? are we transformed by the Spirit in the renewing of our hearts? No discussion on the fulfilment of prophecy must ever divert, but, on the contrary, should draw our minds to the consideration of our personal safety in the sight of God. Are we reposing on the only fixture, the Rock of Ages? Are we hiding ourselves within the everlasting arms,—and when the last storm shall come, and the last thunder shall roar, and the last fires shall blaze, are we conscious that we shall be found resting on the rock that shall never fail? Are we born again? Are we in the world, and of the world? or, are we in the true Church, and of the true Church, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ? If we are, then we can stand and gaze upon the bright panorama that spreads before us, disclosing God in history, fulfilling God in prophecy; knowing that all things only work together for good to them that love God, and hasten that bright and blessed epoch, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God, and all the people shall praise him; and the earth shall yield her increase, and God, even our God shall bless us. Amen.

LECTURE VII.

THE MYSTIC STONE SMITING THE IMAGE.

“*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*”—DANIEL ii. 34, 35, 41—45.

I HAVE explained the origin of the remarkable symbols, the last of which in this chapter I have this evening

read. A great and supernatural image was made to pass before the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar the king, intended to presignify great events destined in the purposes of God to evolve in the latter days. That symbol none of the soothsayers of Babylon could interpret. What God reveals God's people alone will clearly comprehend; and what God makes known by mysterious signs God's own commissioned interpreter is able clearly to explain.

The head, we are told, was made of gold, and was declared expressly by Daniel to be the Babylonian monarchy. That head of gold, or Babylonian kingdom, passes away, as I have showed you by facts drawn from history, and another kingdom forthwith occupies its place: the silver breast, with the silver arms, denoting the conjunct or combined kingdom of the Medo-Persians, which instantly succeeded the kingdom of Babylon, on its overthrow and subjugation by Cyrus, after whose victory its golden glory left scarce a rack behind. We then read of a third kingdom—not guessed by man to be so; but expressly explained by Daniel to succeed the second on its ruin and decay. "His belly and his thighs of brass." This kingdom, I showed you, denotes—the only possible kingdom it can be applied to—the Græco-Macedonian, called frequently, as those acquainted with classic literature are aware, "the brazen-coated Greeks"—the Greeks who wore coats and helmets of mail and brass. This kingdom may be said to have been founded by Philip, who warred so successfully with the Greeks, and against whom the thunders and lightnings of Demosthenes were so vividly and so frequently pointed. He was succeeded by his son Alexander—Alexander the Great—who, I need not tell any one acquainted with the elements of schoolboy literature, swept the whole known world—subjugated every kingdom, almost the instant he touched it, by his victorious phalanxes; and at last, when he had subdued the whole world, he sat down and wept, because there was no more world to conquer. His kingdom passed away after it had fulfilled its mission, and was succeeded by the mightier, more powerful, iron kingdom of the Romans; whose history

rise, and progress, are described by heathen writers, and even by Gibbon, in a manner eminently confirmatory of the predictions of Daniel, as I have already endeavoured to delineate in the former lecture. This fourth empire has been called again and again “the iron empire.” The crown or diadem of its monarchs was iron; the “iron sway” was the name that poets gave to it; and when Gibbon, the sceptic historian, wished to describe its rise, its splendour, and its might, he could find no symbol so expressive of its actual and historical nature as the very imagery used by Daniel, which he consciously or unconsciously quoted, in order thereby to denote and delineate its unrivalled greatness, strength, and progress.

I stated that the Roman empire* occupies a space larger than the rest, because the destiny of the people of God is very much interwoven and mixed up with it. I have showed you (and this is one great point I ask all to recollect), that there can be found no four successive empires in the world, or in the history of mankind, possessed of universal sovereignty, except the four I have mentioned. Now, I ask you, is it possible, if Daniel were a mere guesser—a mere sagacious guesser of future possibilities—is it probable that he could have guessed so exactly what has taken place, and what all history attests? Many are found who ask for miracles. Here is a miracle fresh and patent to all. Here is a delineation minutely given 600 years before the advent of Christ; and kings mount their thrones to fulfil it; and the Roman legion and the Macedonian phalanx march to victory, in order to make its most microscopic lines appear true. Empire succeeds to empire, army destroys army, nation follows in the rear of nation, as if each saw the chart plainly delineated, and felt that each had a Divine commission to go forth, *verbatim et literatim*, to

* In searching Chrysostom for another quotation, I found, in his fourth Homily, on 2 Thess. ii. 5, the following words:—“Ὡσπερ γὰρ αἱ πρὸ τούτου κατελύθησαν βασιλείαι, οἷον ἡ Μήδων ὑπὸ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων, ἡ Βαβυλωνίων ὑπὸ Πέρσων, ἡ Πέρσων ὑπὸ Μακεδόνων, ἡ Μακεδόνων ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων οὕτω καὶ αὕτη ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου, κάκεινος ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκέτι καθεξεί.— Vol. xi. p. 613. Paris, 1838.

fulfil it. Is not this prophecy written by the finger of God? Is not all history the evidence of its inspiration? Is not this a miracle that supersedes the necessity of mere manifestations of power, however impressive, and proclaims with a voice irresistible and full of argument, "Thy word, O God, is truth?"

In this lecture I proceed to show the division of the last kingdom, into what are called "the toes of the feet" of this image. The legs, from the knee, were represented as made of solid iron; the feet were composed of iron and clay; and there were the five toes upon the one foot and the five upon the other, constituting thereby ten. But we should not conjecture it was ten, were it not that subsequent visions in the Book of Daniel, to which I hope to be able to direct your attention, plainly state it; and no less clear statements in the Book of Revelation indicate the same number of kingdoms. We read of the "beast that was, and is not." "And the ten horns which thou sawest *are ten kings*, which have received no kingdom as yet." The words "king" and "kingdom" are used convertibly in Daniel. Mr. Birks, who has written most ably and eloquently upon this book, says the expression "kingdom" is used when it is the subject of change or division, and that it is called a king when it goes forth conquering and deciding the destinies of a nation. Accordingly we read in the 44th verse: "In the days of these *kings*;" but in the previous passage it is said, "these kingdoms." Again, of the king of Babylon it is said: "Thou art that head of gold;" meaning, "thy kingdom is represented by it." The two words, therefore, are used convertibly.

Now it is said, that this last kingdom, which we have shown, I think irresistibly, to be the Roman empire, was to be split into ten divisions; or, if the wild beast from the abyss, seen by John in Patmos, be taken, it was to have ten horns; or, if Daniel's subsequent visions be had recourse to, (which we shall come to by-and-bye,) it was to be ten-fold. We have the fact clearly predicted, that it was to be split or divided into ten kingdoms. Here is a broad prediction, of which palpable facts can alone be

regarded as the fulfilment. Is it then matter of historic fact, as it is matter of prophetic declaration, that this Roman empire has been divided into ten kingdoms at its fall, or decline? That this has been so every historian will tell you. Gibbon speaks of the ten kingdoms: Müller, the German historian, alludes to the ten kingdoms of the Roman empire; and I might quote from historians innumerable, all speaking of this ten-fold division, not as a prophetic announcement, but as an historical and actual fact.

That this was so, I will show, by giving these ten kingdoms as they have appeared in successive centuries. I need not enter into historical details, for they would be inappropriate here:—all that devolves upon me is to show you the fulfilment of the prophecies of God; and the discourse that proves to you that what God inspired in prophecy has been fulfilled in history is a discourse that contributes at least a drop to that mighty, deepening, widening current which carries, day by day, accumulating evidence of the inspiration and heaven-descended origin of God's blessed book.

In the year 532 after the birth of Christ—that is, rather more than a thousand years after the prophecy was uttered—we find the Roman empire, if I may use the expression, on its last legs; and these last legs divided into the following ten toes, or kingdoms:—the Bavarians, the Anglo-Saxons, the Alleman-Franks, the Burgundian Franks, the Visi-Goths, the Suevi-Franks, the Vandals, Ostro-Goths and Lombards. The next or last three, as if to fulfil the significance of another vision of Daniel, were devoured by the “little horn” (which we shall afterwards speak of), or were absorbed by the Roman Pope, and constitute at this moment what are called “the three estates of the Church. Then, in the year 900, there was the following division: Bavaria, Germany, Burgundy, France, Aragon, Castile, Lower Italy, and Rome, comprehending the three estates of the Church—the Vandals, Ostro-Goths, and Lombards. In the year 1214, the division was—Bavaria, Germany, Upper Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Naples, and Rome with its

three estates, represented by the Pope's triple crowns subject to the jurisdiction of the Church, and constituting its property. Then we come to 1700, when we find Bavaria, Austria, Savoy, France, Spain, Portugal, Naples, and Rome with its three estates, making altogether ten kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was at last divided.

As you are aware, there is sometimes in reading history a difficulty in distinguishing the one kingdom from the other; but, mark you, that very difficulty only makes the fulfilment of prophecy more clear, because the assertion of the seer is, that they shall attempt to intermingle with the seed of men, but that they should not succeed in being consolidated into one universal empire, as they were under Nebuchadnezzar, under Cyrus, under Alexander, or under the Roman Cæsars; that with all their intermingling, as the sea interlocks with the land, the one losing and the other gaining a bit, the ten kingdoms should cast up at the end of every century, more or less separate, and should last till the end—when they should be smitten into fragments by a “stone cut out without hands.” I ask you to notice this startling fact. If you will read any history of Europe, or if you will study the maps showing this division—maps which I hope one day to exhibit in my schoolroom, as I have exhibited others, if I can only get them prepared on a large enough scale—you will find that in each century these ten kingdoms have always cast up, have always turned up out of each revolution; and every attempt to make them fewer, or to make the u one, has signally and historically failed.

The expression “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men,” simply means, that they should try by human alliances to intermingle. Napoleon, for instance, connected himself by marriage with Austria. One would have supposed that this would surely have brought about the consolidation of the two empires; but it did not do so. Charlemagne subdued Germany, Saxony, Spain, and Italy; but his conquests were temporary: he had no sooner turned his back upon the country he conquered than it rose and re-asserted its independence. Louis XIV.,

whose brilliant, but sensual and profligate reign may be known to many of you, made the same experiment. Napoleon, with his iron crown, his formidable sword, and his devastating battalions, swept through Europe, reached Africa, visited even Palestine itself, or at least Syria; till at last, in his desperate effort to consolidate all the nations of Europe, Asia, and Africa, under his sway, he was all but paralysed in his infatuated ambition amid the snows of Russia; and finally, in that great victory in which our country signalised itself with glory, because it was a contribution to the peace of Europe and the well-being of mankind, he was finally smitten down. His attempt showed, as did the attempts of all that preceded him, that the inner powers of repulsion in the ten kingdoms were stronger than the outer compression of Napoleon's, or Charlemagne's, or Louis's sword. We have thus, then, the ten kingdoms always coming up, notwithstanding the efforts of successive despots, conquerors, and heroes, to consolidate them. We have the failure of each hero written in blood, and stereotyped upon the page of Europe; in spite of man's great forces, God's true word stands still, fulfilled to the very letter. Did Daniel guess all this? Who is the more credulous—the man who says a Jewish captive guessed the history of Europe, or he that says a Jewish prophet predicted it by the inspiration of God?

We read, after this division of the empire, that “a stone cut out without hands” was to smite “the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay.” Then it is stated that “in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.” “Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold;” so will it be with the setting up of this great kingdom which shall never be destroyed.

What the stone cut out without hands is, there can be scarcely a doubt in the mind of any Christian. The Apostle Peter tells us. “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of

God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." In his birth there was not the least of human agency; in his resurrection there was none. In Christ, peculiarly and alone—and only of him can it be said so—there is realised and verified the symbol of a living stone, "cut out without hands."

But while this may be true, that Christ here personally is to be the Great Destroyer of the nations, it may be no less true that his people instrumentally are to play a part in it. I cannot believe that the action of the "stone cut out without hands" upon the ten kingdoms was the birth of Christ, and the gradual spread of his empire, because it does not say that a power was to be introduced into the Roman empire that should spread like leaven, though that was true; but it is here asserted that a stone was to strike the toes of the image in its last stage, and shatter it to pieces. Now the progress of the Gospel, as a converting power, is gradual, slow, and invisible; but the action of the stone, as here described, is not that of a converting power, but of a destroying and annihilating power. Therefore it is represented as smiting the ten kingdoms, or the toes of the image, and breaking them in pieces, so that they are scattered like chaff upon the threshing-floor of summer.

It is believed by many, and I am one of those who incline to that belief, that the mystic stone at this moment has begun to smite the ten kingdoms of the Roman empire. And I am sure that no one who looks around him upon Europe, and reads its mysterious and its melancholy history,—no one who is at this moment conversant with what is doing in France, where the volcano is smothered, but anything but extinguished; or with what is now passing in Italy, where the whole soil rocks, and is convulsed, as if by the heaving of some mighty, dread, subterranean elements, can doubt that if the stone be not smiting at this moment, preparatory to the final destruction of the kingdoms of Europe, there is that going on which is the likeliest possible to it. Bavaria, Austria, Savoy, France, Spain, Portugal, Naples, the three kingdoms of the Pope, or, as they are called, "the

three estates of the Church"—the Vandals, Ostro-Goths, and Lombards—are all at this moment convulsed, each to its very centre; flying from each other, as if by an irresistible centrifugal force; breaking to pieces, as if under the blows of some mysterious stone: Hungary flying off from Austria, as if a hammer smote it, and chipped it off; Sicily dashed off from Naples; the Pope's "three estates" rent, torn, agitated, convulsed; Ireland feeling also the blows, as if it belonged to the ten kingdoms, whose Popish characteristics were to remain to the end, and struggling—we trust, in vain—to be severed from the nation that is its best, and its greatest, though it has been in past times its guilty and its offending friend. Does not all this look as if the stone had begun to smite the ten toes of the kingdoms of the earth? And if it be so, how solemn is the moment we occupy! standing on the eve of startling events; hearing thundering through the sky the reverberation of falling thrones, and exploding dynasties—sharing, indeed, a momentary lull, but, like the lull at sea which the sailors know between the hurricanes, only preparatory to the rending elements that are instantly and terribly to succeed.

Need I tell you that almost all men who have looked abroad upon the subject are full of these thoughts? You cannot read the foreign communications of any of our newspapers without seeing it; you cannot converse with any man acquainted with the state of Europe who does not tremble, if he has any stake in it, for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth. There is an ancient German prophecy, of which you may have heard, that can be traced half a century back; I do not say it is inspired—far from it—because I have no evidence that it is so—but it was certainly a strange guess for the Germans to make so long ago: "I would not be a king in 1848; I would not be a soldier in 1849; I would not be a grave-digger in 1850; I will be anything you please in 1851." This may be but a rough conjecture; but how significant is, "I would not be a king in 1848!" How striking is, "I would not be a soldier in 1849!" And whether "I would not be a gravedigger in

1850," is to be the foretoken of a yet more desolating scourge than any of those through which, by God's mercy, we have passed, God only knows. This, however, we know—we are guilty. This we know—we ought now, in the moment of respite, both as affects the physical, and still more, the spiritual condition of our fellow-men, to lend a helping-hand, and that right speedily. A pious person, writing from the continent, makes this statement: "Much that has come before us of late shows how rapidly things are classified—how all men are ranging themselves under their respective banners—all watching for the morning, the one for the Lord, and the other for Lucifer." While some are looking for Christ, the pantheists of Germany are looking for what they call "the coming man," the incarnation or personation of intellect, a human God. The beauty of the Gospel is, that God was made man; the error of pantheism is, that man is believed to be made God. The former was real; the latter is a mockery.

I have shown you, then, kingdom rushing from kingdom; one detached from another, and all left unsettled. If you were to look into churches, you would see the same thing; fragments flying off from one church; larger fragments from another church; and the parties standing by, and seeming to enjoy the rending, themselves being rent in turn. This is the very age of breaking up—the age of crushing, of destroying, of rending—the age, in short, of the "stone" smiting the ten toes, and grinding to powder the kingdoms of this world.

What would also confirm that which I have now been stating is, that it seems, from the language employed, to synchronise with the description of the seventh vial given by John. "The seventh angel poured his vial into the air." That I have already explained to you. You have the air physically and morally tainted. I told you in Exeter Hall in 1847, before the vial was poured out, that the effects would be, whenever it came, if the principle of interpretation I thought to be true was correct, a taint of the air with a physical or pesti-

lential taint, and the deterioration of public opinion, sentiment, and belief, by deadly and destructive principles. "And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, 'It is done.'" Then, what takes place? "There were voices"—who has not heard the voices that have been sounding over Europe for the last three years, in all shapes and forms:—"and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake." As I told you, every newspaper said, that 1848 was the year of earthquakes. An earthquake shook all the ten kingdoms till they reeled and tottered, as if about to issue in their final destruction. "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God,"—the Popedom is now being visited and scourged, as the beginning of its utter and thorough destruction. If this, then, synchronises with the seventh vial, you have still more confirmatory evidence—or rather, other language illustrative, still more forcibly, by its symbols, of the period at which we are now arrived.

If it synchronises with the seventh vial, it would also synchronise with what our blessed Lord has told us in Matthew (this is before the coming of Christ): "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun" (used to denote imperial power) "be darkened, and the moon" (either a lesser civil power, or the ecclesiastical) "shall not give her light, and the stars" (or rulers in the church) "shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

And if it synchronises with this, it will also synchronise with other predictions in the 37th and 38th chapters of Ezekiel: "Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee." There is a series of predictions in these chapters of

Ezekiel revealing judgments that were to take place in the latter days; the restoration of the Jews, and glory of the Gentiles, which you can read at your leisure.

It appears, then, that just before the advent of the Lord, there is to be the vial poured into the air, the thunder, the lightning, the great earthquake, and Babylon, the Romish apostasy, coming into remembrance before God;—secondly, to use the words of our Lord, the sun and moon and stars darkening, the heavens covered as with a sackcloth, and men's hearts failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth; and thirdly—to quote the imagery of Daniel—that the great stone (beyond all dispute, the Saviour) cut out without hands, is to smite the image, and break it in pieces, till it becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, swept to and fro by the wind, and carried away, so that no place should be ultimately found for it; and this stone, despised and rejected of men, whom men would not have as their foundation, becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth. Every one who looks abroad, as I have told you, sees what I may call the presumptive evidence of these things. You have only to look at the nations of Europe to see that they want the great cohesive element of living, Scriptural religion. No society can stand unless it be pervaded and knit together by the cement of a living Christianity. The strength of Britain is in the ratio of the depth of Britain's Christianity. The stability of our throne rests upon the Christianity of our population. Never let it be forgotten, that the despised Scripture reader, and humble city missionary, in the dens and alleys, and subterranean cellars of this great metropolis, are contributing (the great men of the world may not see it, but Christian men feel it) to the stability of our most gracious Queen's throne, to the splendour of her crown, and to the glory and greatness of this great empire. It is by religion that a nation stands; and in the absence of it a hundred thousand bayonets are not stronger than a hundred thousand straws—as Louis Philippe, in his own experience, can tell you; and with that religion in a nation's heart, it needs few battalions

round the throne, or soldiers to maintain and to defend it. There is a defence in the midst of us mightier than all—the glory of the Lord, our refuge and our strength, and our present help in time of trouble. But with the nations of the earth, every one sees that there is no chance of their keeping together. All their constitutions are carnal. They are merely being patched up; the evil day is, as it were, staved off. Who does not see, who has the least knowledge of what is going on, that the kingdoms of Europe—the ten kingdoms—are kept down and quieted purely by management? Like an old ruin, they are propped up; like a diseased body, they are kept in life by medicine; but the props will fall; the medicine will lose its power; and then will come, as Metternich prophesied, “the deluge, desolation, destruction, ruin.”

Seeing, then, that the gold and the silver, and the brass, and the iron and clay—all these things must be dissolved—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Macedonia, Greece, the Roman Empire, and the ten kingdoms—let me ask this question of you—a question that has been asked for 1800 years:—“What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” Reading the handwriting of doom upon the walls of palaces, and upon the face of thrones; hearing the successive crashes of nations booming over sea and land, as if they were the trumps of judgment, spared as we are, in a momentary lull when all seems quiet, only that the forces may muster for the more terrific havoc that is to come; standing on a part of the earth toward which earthquakes seem to roll, and yet, by a divine protection, seem successively to be repelled;—how earnestly should we examine ourselves,—how should we think of our state before God,—how should we try to anticipate, from the knowledge of our hearts, as reflected from God’s Holy Word, where we shall stand when the last crash shall come, and the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven, shall cover the sky with an unearthly splendour,

and all men shall, for one brief period, enjoy a dreadful, suspensive, trembling pause, anxious to know, "shall we stand at the right hand, or at the left hand of the Judge?" "Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?"

But does not a retrospect of this image, which represented to Daniel all the kingdoms of the world, tell us how to estimate these kingdoms? Riches—what are they? Fragments of the golden head; mere filings of the silver breast and of the silver arms; possessed, indeed, of currency below, but destitute of any currency where Christ and our inheritance are. And what, after all, is earthly rank? It is merely a foothold upon the iron legs; or, if a higher rank, upon the thighs of brass; or, if a higher still, upon the silver arm; and the highest rank in the land is merely seated on the golden head. And when we know that the golden head, and silver arm, and belly of brass, and legs of iron, and toes of clay, shall be all smashed to pieces by that Stone, scattered like chaff upon the summer threshing-floor, oh! how pale does all earthly rank become—how poor does all worldly grandeur appear—how little worthy of a people's love—how little entitled to a nation's anxiety! What a call to us to think of the "unsearchable riches" that moth cannot corrupt—to think of the "honour that cometh from God"—to think, and secure while we think of a foothold, not upon the leg of iron, nor belly of brass, nor arm of silver, nor head of gold, but a foothold on the Rock of Ages, which shall become one day "a great mountain," and shall "fill the whole earth." Blessed hope! brilliant prospect! As it was told by David, in the 72nd Psalm, "His name shall endure for ever:" it shall last like the sun. The names of Calvin, of Luther, of Knox, of Wesley, and Whitfield, and other names that may be musical to our ears, shall all be hushed, and the name of Christ alone shall endure audible for ever. All nations shall bless him, and all nations shall be blessed in him; and when that Stone has been turned into this great mountain, and when the whole earth shall be covered by that mountain, then shall be the era of the triumph of the

Catholic, or the universal, and the true church; that mountain-brow basking in perpetual sunshine; and around that mighty mountain that fills the whole earth shall be successive belts, like bright zones, of adoring and worshipping companies, that say and sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto our God; to him be glory for ever and ever." Glorious structure, beautiful and holy home, sublime cathedral, happy rest, for the holy and happy people of God! No hospitals will be there, for there shall be no sick; no graves shall be dug in it, for death shall be destroyed; no sorrow, nor sighing, nor tears; but the church catholic, apostolic, holy, blessed, for ever and ever,—Christ their King, and none known by any other name than Christians, the anointed subjects of the great King.

My dear friends, some men quarrel with the study of prophecy. I have learned more since I began to study it thoroughly than ever I learned before. I do not say that these simple truths are denied by ministers of the Gospel, but certainly they are not studied. They say, "We do not like to study these subjects." They even boast of their good sense, in skipping the book of Daniel and the Apocalypse. Alas! for such unprotestant preachers. Whatever God has written, it is surely worth our trouble to study; and if we commit an error here and there charity will forgive it, and God will forgive it for the sake of the great truths that are beside it. This I have learned ever since I studied these truths: I have learned less and less to value those distinctions of church and dissent, of episcopacy and independency and presbytery; and to feel more and more their utter insignificance in comparison with that glory that streams from the better land, and shows me that, in the sight of God, in the eye of eternity, there are but two classes—the lost, in hell, who have clung to antichrist, and the saved, in heaven, with whom Christ has been all and in all.

The future! cruel were the power
Whose doom would tear thee from my heart;
Thou sweetener of the present hour,
We cannot—no—we will not part!

Then haste thee, Time—'tis kindness all,
That speeds thy wingéd feet so fast :
Thy pleasures stay not till they pall ;
And all thy pains are quickly past.
Thou fliest and bear'st away our woes ;
And as the shadowy trains depart,
The memory of sorrow grows
A lighter burden on the heart.

LECTURE VIII.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

“ *Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter’s clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron*

mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”—DANIEL ii. 31—44.

TIME would fail me, were I to attempt to recapitulate what I have preached on the portion of Scripture which I have now read. It will be sufficient to observe, that I showed that the head of gold was the Babylonian kingdom—the first supreme and universal sovereignty that then existed upon earth; that the breast and arms of silver we could have no difficulty in defining to be the Medo-Persian kingdom—the breast denoting its monarch, and the two arms, Media and Persia, united in him, and constituting one kingdom; that the belly and thighs of brass represented the next succeeding universal kingdom, the Græco-Macedonians, or the Macedonian Greeks, known in classic story as the “brass-covered Greeks,” who, first under Philip, and next, and completely, under his son Alexander, swept the earth, and subdued every kingdom under their powerful sceptre. I also showed, by irresistible proofs, drawn from Gibbon, and from historians whose testimony in this matter must be regarded as dispassionate, that the fourth kingdom, the fourth in succession, and the only succeeding kingdom that had absolute and universal sovereignty, was the iron kingdom of Rome, or the Roman empire. Now, this is not mere conjecture. I ask you to point out to me, in past history, any other four successive kingdoms each of which was in its day mistress of the globe, as far as the globe was then known. There have been but four universal empires—the four I have stated—each sovereign and supreme in its sway, and each displaced by its suc-

cessor. The last of these, the Roman empire, which was of iron, subdued and ground to pieces all the kingdoms that preceded it. I showed you also, by comparisons with the Book of Revelation, and subsequent passages in the Prophecy of Daniel, to which I will refer you, that, as the two feet of the image were divided into ten toes, the Roman empire might be expected, if the prophecy were true, to be divided into ten kingdoms. If you will open any history, of any school or creed, you will find it stated that the Roman empire was thus divided into ten kingdoms in the fourth or fifth century; this is matter of universal admission. Strange enough, ever since that division took place—now some fourteen hundred years ago—the ten kingdoms, which I specified by name, are seen, in every century, more or less clearly to cast up. Were they to cast up the same in limits and geographical extent in every century, prophecy would not be fulfilled; because the prediction is that they would try to “mingle with the seed of men;” that is, there should be efforts made to compress, to consolidate, to jumble them; in other words, destroy—though not intentionally—God’s prediction, and make them cease to be what God has declared they long shall be—numerically and clearly *ten*. Now, it is a fact, that ever since the division into ten, successive rulers have tried to amalgamate them into one great universal empire; and in each instance they have found that the word of the Almighty was stronger than the sword of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, or of Napoleon, or of any other ambitious prince or soldier that made the experiment. Again and again marriages have been made among the ten kings. The most powerful effort, and the nearest to successful, was made by Napoleon, when he allied himself to the house of Austria. He controlled the most gallant, the bravest, the most active nation on the continent of Europe. Europe seemed to lie prostrate at his feet, ready to accept his sovereignty; the cup of universal empire was almost at his lips; but God had destined it otherwise, and expressly said it should be otherwise, 600 years before the birth of Christ, and more than 2,000 years before Napoleon was born.

The waters of the Borodino engulfed his invincible battalions, and the snows of Russia became winding-sheets to half his army, and the bones of the rest, bleaching or buried on the plains of Waterloo, tell how feeble is the might of man, and how lasting is the truth of God.

But we are told that in the time of these ten kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was to be divided, the God of heaven should set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed. Now, this cannot be the commencement of Christianity 1800 years ago, because it is said that God would set up this kingdom subsequent to the division of the empire into ten kingdoms; assuredly he will yet set up this kingdom in all its grandeur, completeness, and sovereignty; and between the ruin of the ten kingdoms of the Roman empire and the culminating glory of the Christian kingdom there shall be nothing intervening. This last and universal sovereignty of the Christian kingdom was to be the result of another fact: that a "stone cut out without hands" (which I showed by comparison to be the Lord Jesus) was, not gradually to leaven, but suddenly to smite the ten kingdoms. You will notice that the stone, which was Christ, ("to whom coming, as unto a *living stone*, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen and precious,") was to smite the image in its ten-fold division state. It was not to smite it in the time of its golden head, nor in the time of its silver breast, nor in the time of its brass thighs, nor in the time of its iron limbs; but when the iron limbs should be divided into ten toes, partly clay and partly iron. This stone was suddenly to fall upon the ten kingdoms, and to split them into atoms, and scatter them as chaff is driven and scattered upon the summer threshing-floor. I showed you, by two or three simple facts, that it seems as if the blows of that stone were at this moment reverberating throughout the continent of Europe. Who can fail to see kingdom after kingdom—without any explanation of the why—without any preconcerted scheme, or plan, or conspiracy, that will account for the result—suddenly broken to atoms? And if great statesmen are to be

believed, whose sagacity is generally the nearest thing to prophecy, never was the continent of Europe at this moment in a more unsettled state. The stone seemed first to have smitten France; and left that monarch, who fell asleep with a hundred thousand bayonets bristling around him, a refugee and an exile on the rise of tomorrow's sun. The stone then struck Austria; and its monarch was an exile among the Swiss. It next struck Germany; and even that giant empire reeled and staggered under the blow. The stone then struck Italy; the Pope was driven from his throne; and the "three horns" that belonged to him—"the three states of the Church"—part of the ten—are at this moment substantially severed from him. I was told by a Roman refugee, soon after this, that the prospect of his ever wielding the temporal sovereignty over that people is remoter at this moment, than ever. And, as if the very elements were sustaining men in their efforts to destroy him—not the man Pius IX., but the personation, the head, the representative of Babylon—we find, that no sooner was he settled in his recent place of retirement, than the earthquake rocked the soil, and Vesuvius burst out with preternatural fury; and the Pope himself, who fled from his people a year ago, was flying from the burning element; as if the foretokens of the predicted downfall of Babylon were accumulating and thickening every day.* When I read this fact in the papers, it reminded me of what Mr. Elliot has shown will be the

* "That which nothing else has been able to effect, the eruption of Vesuvius has effected, the flight, or rather the removal of the Pope. It is only, however, to the palace on Capo di Monte, where he can enjoy the magnificent scenes now being exhibited on Vesuvius without trembling at the dreadful roaring of the mountain, and without fear of being overwhelmed. I hear nothing, however, of a more distant flight. Cardinal Dupont is still here, and the steamer, the Vauban, which brought him, waits in port. Arrests still continue here, and I hear that, last night, a terribly large batch was seized and sent off to prison—some say twenty-seven men of birth and respectability. Mr. Brown, an American, formerly Consul at Rome, has been ordered to quit Naples within forty-eight hours, whereupon an indignant and angry correspondence has taken place between the American

nature and agent of the destruction of Babylon. His belief is—and Scripture leads him to this conclusion—that that gigantic despotism, which has made slaves of the free and martyrs of the holy, and out of which there is only escape for such men as Achilli, when the power of our country and that of France are made to tell upon the fears of the guardians of its despotism—is to be literally burned with fire, and that there are volcanic elements enough in Italy, not only to account for, but to lead us to expect, so terrible and so consuming a catastrophe. We wait: the only concern we have in the

Charge d'Affaires and the Neapolitan Government. As yet I know not if, or how, it has terminated.

“I must not forget to inform you of the state of Vesuvius. For a week, we have now enjoyed the most splendid eruption which has taken place for many years. The ashes have been carried as far, we know, as twenty miles, and, no doubt, much farther. The lava descends in two streams upon Ottajano, where it has destroyed a palace and much land belonging to a nobleman of that name, and another towards Torri deli Annunziata, whilst the flames and the immense masses of rock which are ejected, form, at night, a splendid and terrific spectacle. The roaring of the mountain on Saturday night last was such as to disturb the whole country for miles round, and here in Naples our windows shook with every repetition of it, which was unceasing night and day. Immense crowds, of course, walk over to the other side of the bay to get a nearer view; religious processions are moving about, for the intercession of the Madonna and the saints; and it is said that the Pope is to perform some ceremonial to cause the mountain to stay its ruinous proceedings. I am sorry to add that the accidents to those who went over have been very sad. On Saturday night a young Pole was struck in the leg by a burning stone, which cut through the limb, and he died on the mountain from loss of blood. A young American officer was struck in the arm, which hung suspended by a bit of flesh. On his arrival in Naples he had lost so much blood that an amputation could not take place, and as no reaction has up to this time taken place, it is not expected that he can live. A gendarme is also reported killed, and two men who had fallen a sacrifice to the eruption were said to have been buried yesterday at Portici. Some anxiety has been felt for an Englishman and his wife who had not returned from a visit to the mountain; and yet crowds roll on night and day to see this wonderful phenomenon. From the neighbourhood of the mountain all the inhabitants have fled, and the powder from the magazine at Torre has been removed.”—*Correspondent of the Daily News*. (April, 1850.)

prospect of her catastrophe is: "Come out of her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and receive not of her plagues." I believe those who hold what are called Tractarian views are partaking of the sins of Babylon, and that they will perish in her ruin unless they repent. I believe it is the duty of every man more and more to protest against the system, and whatever be his love to its victims—and that love cannot be too intense, and he cannot speak the word of truth in too much love—to speak of it as God speaks of it, and himself to take care that he share in none of her sins; and so shall he not suffer any of her plagues.

Having, then, reviewed the whole of my statement on the great image, I now proceed to notice the kingdom that is here stated to succeed the other kingdoms, to cover the whole earth, and never to be moved. This kingdom is composed, first, of principles; next, of persons: both now imperfect, but by-and-bye to be made perfect in glory.

First of all, it is composed of principles. The Spirit of God says—"The kingdom of God is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Here you have this kingdom in its essential and constituent principles. Before unfolding these let me first notice its negative aspect.

"The kingdom of God is *not* meat nor drink." In other words, nothing merely ceremonial constitutes the kingdom of God. The ceremonies may be too many, or they may be too few—they may be very brilliant, or they may be very bald—they may please the senses, or gratify only the intellect: it is of no consequence. These things do not form a vital part of the kingdom of God. Nothing, in the next place, that is merely ritual constitutes this kingdom. "It is not," says the Apostle, "meat nor drink." There may be rubrics, or there may be none—you may fast, or you may feast—you may kneel at prayer, or you may stand—you may kneel at the communion-table, or you may sit—the minister may wear a silk gown, or a surplice, or neither; he may preach without notes, or he may preach with them; these are

matters of ceremony evanescent as the clouds; the great truths beyond and beneath them are, like the stars, fixed and beautiful for ever. This kingdom is not described by any fixed and clearly specified ecclesiastical *régime*. The church may be governed by bishops, or it may be governed by presbyters, or it may be governed by the people; it may be episcopal, presbyterial, or congregational; it may be favoured by the state, or it may be free from it; it may be endowed by the state, or supported by the people; it may be a very imperfect church, or the most perfect church of all;—these are matters that may be of less or greater advantage to the kingdom, but they are not, of necessity, essentials to the very existence of the kingdom; and if men only felt this more, they would labour less to reform the mere externals, and labour more to plant in the heart and impress on the people the vital and essential doctrines of the Gospel. The true way to get a church perfect is to try to have perfect men to compose it. The purity of the government of a church will always be in the direct ratio of the piety of the people that constitute that church. If we prayed more and quarrelled less, and each in his sphere did the work that devolved upon him more heartily, there would be far greater success in promoting the Gospel—in vindicating the honour of God—in winning souls. Far preferable would this be to any efforts to improve the outworks, or to alter its constitution, or to change its robes, its ceremonies, and its rites. Never forget that the citadel of a church's strength is not outward, but inward Christianity. Vital forces are in each individual heart; not in bishop, presbytery, or people. Thus, then, no one outward government is specified as an essential part of the kingdom of Christ. It is not "Lord, Lord," but being Christian; it is not creeds, or fasts, or incense, or genuflexion; it is not the voluntary system, nor the establishment; it is not beads, nor holy water; it is not dipping, nor sprinkling; it is not kneeling, nor standing; it is not Gerizim, nor Sinai; "neither on this mountain," nor on that; "the kingdom of God is neither meat nor drink,"

nor ceremony, nor form, "but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Let us now look at the positive side of this kingdom, or the constituent and normal elements of that kingdom which is to supersede all, and rise in beauty and glory when other kingdoms have passed away. It is composed, first, of "righteousness." What is this righteousness? It is two-fold: there is a righteousness without us, by which we are justified; and there is a righteousness within us, by which we are sanctified. The first is the *act* of God's free grace; the second is the *work* of God's Holy Spirit. The righteousness by which we are justified, is as perfect at the moment we believe, as it will be when we are admitted into heaven; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is day by day growing in strength, in influence, in power, until grace is lost in glory. The first, or the righteousness by which we are justified, is *imputed* to us; the second, or the righteousness by which we are sanctified, is *imparted* to us. The first is our *title* to heaven; the second is our *fitness* for heaven. This righteousness, both as imputed and imparted—the act of Christ, and the work of the Spirit—is an essential element of that kingdom which "is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Another element, we are told, is "peace." "Justified by faith, we have peace with God." There is no peace real or lasting, except the peace that passeth understanding. Old Mr. Howells used to say, "If you see two dogs at peace with each other, it is the indirect evidence of the power of the Gospel." There would be nothing but war, interminable and exterminating, throughout all society, but for the direct or indirect influence of the Gospel of Jesus. When we are justified by faith in the righteousness of Jesus, we have then peace: peace with God, for he is our father—peace with our conscience, for on it is the reflection of that Father's countenance—peace with every man who is a Christian, for he is a brother—peace with every man who is not a Christian, for he may, by grace, be made a brother: peace,

not indolence ; not ease, in any respect, but strife—not self-indulgence, but self-sacrifice—not acquiescence in what is evil, for the sake of quiet, but war with what is evil, for the sake of God—not a prudential avoiding of quarrels, but the sustained endeavour to make all things what grace has made us ; and to feel our peace increasing and flowing as a river, in proportion as the Gospel of grace pervades, and permeates, and leavens all around us. Such is the peace here indicated—peace with God, peace with conscience, and peace with one another.

The third element, we are told, is “joy.” It began in righteousness, it proceeds in peace, it culminates in joy. In other words, the kingdom of God—that is, Christianity—is one-third character and two-thirds privilege. I have often declared, what I now repeat, that the Gospel was inspired, that Jesus died, that the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost, as much to make you and me happy and joyful, as to make you and me righteous and holy. Nay, the very first sound in that glorious message is “good news.” For what is the meaning of the word Gospel? “Good news.” Instead of shrinking from that Gospel, instead of looking upon it as something sepulchral and awful, that will dissipate all your joys, and dry up all the currents of your pleasure, you ought to know that the main elements of the kingdom of God are peace and joy. I am sure, if we confess at the throne of grace that the Gospel has not made us righteous as it ought to have done, we ought to confess with equal sorrow that it has not made us happy, peaceful, joyful, as it was meant to do. If there be any man in this assembly who is not a happy man, it is not because the Gospel has made him miserable ; if there be any man in this assembly who is not a joyful man, it is not because the Gospel is not fitted to make him so ; but because he is cherishing some sin which acts like a blind upon the Gospel light, and prevents its cheering, its enlivening, and illuminating beams from entering into the chamber of his soul, and there lighting up perpetual sunshine. The Gospel, then, is one-third character, and two-thirds privilege : not meat nor drink, nor form nor

ceremony, about which men fight; but "righteousness, peace, and joy."

How striking it is that all the quarrels among Christians are mostly about the negative part—about meat or drink. Now, if they would lay aside looking at the negative—form, ceremony, fasting, feasting, silk robe and surplice, meat and drink, about which disputes are endless, and would look more at "righteousness, peace, and joy," about which we feel unanimous, they would find they had left the region of passion and the arena of conflict, the grey twilight of misapprehension; and that they were in the province of unity, amid the air of peace, and the lights of joy where the wilderness rejoices, and the solitary place blossoms as the rose.

Having ascertained what this kingdom is, as God himself has defined it, we see what it is that can truly renovate mankind. Man has various prescriptions: God has but one. One man has a temperance society, and that is, I dare say, good; another has a peace society, and that is good enough, I suppose in its place; another man has some other society for some other object, and it may be equally good. But all these must fail, however good in design, however pretty in their little spheres of little working—they are toys, not quickening truths. Men will never be truly temperate, until the grace of God that teacheth to live soberly is implanted in their hearts; and nations will never get peace by burning the navy and reducing the army. One of the greatest means, perhaps, in this sinful world of keeping peace may be the maintenance of the army and the navy; and one of the greatest blunders, I fear, may be found to be the destroying or weakening of either. But neither army nor navy are the means of creating peace. The only thing that can make peace is the kingdom of peace in every man's conscience, and the reign of the Prince of peace in every king's kingdom. When the whole world has become Christian, then will be the time to beat the spear into the ploughshare, but not until then. Our Lord has told us, "I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword;" not intentionally, but necessarily.

The result of holiness coming into contact with sin, peace coming into contact with war, love coming into contact with enmity, will be war, discord, division, dispute. All man's plans for ameliorating society fail, because they touch merely the robes of society; they do not reach its heart. Man would be for manufacturing peace and happiness by machinery: God, for making happiness and peace by implanting within the principles of the Gospel of peace. Man hits upon a scheme; God implants a principle. Man wants to make duty a soft lawn, not a battle; his life sitting in an easy chair, not a race that he has to run. Thus he proposes to reform society by reforming its circumstances, an empirical scheme which must always, inevitably fail. Christianity proposes a revolution within, and then there will be a reformation without. It acts by mind; all other schemes act by mechanism. Man's plan is to begin at the circumference, and try to get inward; God's plan is to begin at the heart, and then carry power, principle, and reformation outward. Man's way is to give man something that he has not; God's way is to make man something that he is not. Man's plan is to give the patient a softer bed; God's plan is to cure the patient. The one is weakness, the other is power. The one is the quackery of man; the other is the kingdom of God, and "righteousness, peace, and joy" in the individual heart; and thus "righteousness, peace, and joy" in universal society.

If this be the kingdom of God, is it implanted in your hearts? However sure the prospect of its universal sovereignty may be—however possible that it may burst upon the world like a thunder-clap; yet it is true that, day by day, it is gaining power and progress in individual hearts—it is advanced by means—it is ours to use them. Day by day, I solemnly believe, all society is splitting into two grand sections. You will find that all such names as Churchmen and Dissenters, Independents, and Baptists, and Wesleyans, *et cetera, et cetera*, and unfortunately *et cetera* still, will be lost in one great phalanx—they that are the Lord's. On the other hand,

there will be another section antagonistic to that—Tractarians, Puseyites, Papists, the Greek Church, and all that hold the traditions of men—all passed over to their side, and under their banner, and forming the phalanx of antichrist: God's people finding the centre of their unity in Christ; they that are not God's people finding the centre of their unity in antichrist. During the heat of the collision, the Lord will appear, and shine before his ancients gloriously; and after smiting all the opposing kingdoms of the world, as the great mystic stone, he will, in the language of the text, "set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." I ask, my dear friends, have you the elemental principle of this kingdom in your hearts? In other words, are you Christians? Remember, if there be any valid excuse why you should not be Christians, you will never be condemned for the want of Christianity. Wherever there is a valid excuse, there is no duty; but there is no excuse in the height or in the depth, why every man in this assembly should not, this very night, resolve that for him and his, he will serve the Lord. All the excuses that men make are paltry and untenable. One says: "How liberal I would be, if I had not this encumbrance." Another says: "How religious I would be, if I were not so busy." Another, again, says: "How good I should be, if I could only dispose of those circumstances which trammel me at present, but which by-and-bye will be removed." My dear friends, circumstances are to be the servants of man; not man the servant of circumstances. We have nothing in the universe to do with circumstances, but to conquer them. The solemnity of duty, the obligation of convictions, responsibility to God, cannot wait till the circumstances around us are adjusted, but must pass, like ploughshares, through all circumstances; leaving scope for duty, none for excuse. I ask again, is the kingdom of God erected in your heart? Do you know what it is to have a righteousness to lean upon, so complete that you would not fear at this moment to look the Sovereign Judge in the face, and feel that

there is no condemnation for you? Have you, at this moment, that peace which would enable you to feel perfectly composed if the earth were to vibrate beneath your feet by successive earthquakes, the sun to become as blood, the stars to fall from their sockets, and the last conflagration to kindle on the globe that you tread upon—would you feel peace? Nay more, in the absence of all, in the loss of the fruit of the fig-tree—of all the property you have accumulated—in the midst of all losses, can you say: “Yea, I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation?” Christianity is not a mere creed that a man subscribes to; it is a kindling principle that runs through the whole of man’s nature. Christianity is not a dogma for schoolmen to wrangle about; it is a great, vital, personal experience for each man to feel, and for the absence of which each man is responsible. We can all dispute about orthodoxy, and quarrel about ceremonies; and the devil avails himself of such quarrels to conceal and darken the solemn obligations to believe in Jesus, to go to God, and to have peace with him through the blood of the covenant, and righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let us cease to quarrel. Let us begin to live.

I have thus looked at this kingdom as composed of principles; let me notice it now as composed of subjects. Who are the subjects of this kingdom? In one short sentence, they are those in whose hearts are “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” But, if I may expand it, I would say, the subjects of this kingdom are not, as I have already endeavoured to indicate, men of any one denomination, or any one ceremony. You may be churchmen, or you may be dissenters, and not subjects of this kingdom. You may pray with a liturgy, or pray without one, and yet not be subjects of this kingdom. You may worship in chapel, in church, or in cathedral, and yet not be subjects of this kingdom. The subjects of this kingdom are not distinguished by the conventionalisms of man, but by inward regeneration of heart by the Holy Spirit of God. I do believe that if the attempt succeed that is now made to

identify, by a decision of any sort, baptism—a precious sacrament—with regeneration; leading men to suppose that, baptised canonically, they are regenerated surely, the most awful apostasy will be commenced by the church of many of our fellow-subjects. If it were only understood what is man's state by nature, they would never dream that baptising him by water could essentially alter that state. It may alter it ecclesiastically: morally and truly, it cannot. What is man's state? If man, by sin and by the fall, had merely suffered a slight shock—if all that Adam's ruin and Adam's sin had done were to throw man into a faint or swoon, then I do not see why water sprinkled on him might not revive him, and set him on his feet again. But if this be not the expression of the true state—if man be really dead in trespasses and in sins, let me ask you, who can raise the spiritually dead? Only he who will sound the trumpet, and the dead shall come forth from their graves, can speak to the heart, and the heart of stone shall become a heart of living, of sensible, and of sympathising flesh. The members of this kingdom are not the baptised, nor the circumcised as such; but they are members of the body of Christ, the sons of God, the elect of God, a chosen generation, a peculiar people, a holy nation: “the lights of the world,” “the salt of the earth,” “living stones, a “royal priesthood,” “kings and priests,” and “servants of God,” the “sheep of his pasture,” “disciples,” and “heirs of God,” “*Christians*,”—the first name, as it will also be the last.

Let me notice, briefly, the external characteristics of this kingdom. It is a catholic kingdom. We are the true catholic church; and this is a branch of the catholic church. The Romish church is a section split off from it; and our objection to it is, that it is sectarian and not catholic. Catholic is the attribute of some of the epistles in the New Testament; it is the attribute of the church of Christ. But whom does it comprehend? First, all those who have fallen asleep in Christ. Secondly, those who are now alive, and born again. Thirdly, those who are not yet born, but will be born,

and shall be born again, in the Providence of God. These are they who compose the catholic kingdom; and when the last day shall come, all its subjects, from the first hour of the world's existence to its last, shall meet together, and constitute the one visible catholic church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This kingdom is a united kingdom. Its members may differ in forms, in ceremony, in detail, as men ever differ in these respects; but they have one common characteristic—they are born again, they are children of one Father, they are walking in Christ the one way, they are regenerated by one Spirit, they cleave to one Bible, they are looking for one home: Let there be no strife between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we be brethren." The Romish Church is a united kingdom, but it has a false centre—man; we are a united kingdom, but it is around the true centre, and that centre—Christ. And as I told you before, it is not enough to claim uniformity; there must be unity. Man can make a company uniform by dressing them alike, and making them march or move to the same tune; but God alone can make hearts one by uniting them to himself, and inspiring them by his Almighty grace.

In the next place, this kingdom is a holy kingdom: it is composed of saints. Who are saints? If you ask a member of the Church of Rome, he will say, Saints are those who wrought miracles, and, fifty years after the miracles were wrought, were canonised by the Pope, according to a certain ceremony appointed for that purpose, and who are to be prayed to. If you ask the Bible, it tells you: "The saints at Philippi," "The saints at Damascus," "The saints that are at Corinth," "The saints that are at Rome." In other words, all true Christians are saints. The word is a translation of *ἅγιοι*, the holy ones, the people of God. We are either saints by grace, or we are sinners by nature, and in no respect saints at all. If we belong to this kingdom, as its subjects, we shall be characterised by holiness, not perfect, but progressive; holiness in aim, holiness in aspiration, holiness in sympathy, and perfect holiness

when time shall be no more. At present, I do not believe there is any one perfectly holy; I do not believe that perfect holiness is attainable in this world; for there is no stage of a man's life in which he will not find these words applicable to him: "If we say," says John—not separating himself from his flock—"that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "But," he adds, "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans need only be read to show you that there is a battle-field in every man's heart; a law of the spirit that wars against the law of the flesh; so that when you would do good evil is present with you. The man who is born again, and seeks to be holy, as God is holy, is like the poor captive bird in the cage: the cage cannot kill the bird, the bird cannot free itself from the cage; it can only still wait, and persevere, and sing, and seek, and look, till the hour of its freedom, its perfect emancipation into brighter realms and better days, draws near.

Finally, then, this kingdom, thus characterised and composed of these subjects, is the kingdom that shall destroy all other kingdoms and cover the whole earth. Babylon, the great apostasy of the earth, shall be utterly consumed; the smoke of her fire shall rise up for ever and ever. The Jews shall be gathered to their own land; yea, Jesus shall shine in the midst of them, and before his ancients gloriously. Then the body shall be raised, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive shall be caught up with them, and so meet the Lord in the air. Then Christ shall be revealed; we shall be like him—that is, perfectly holy; we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Then sacraments shall cease, for they are only to last "till I come again;" then faith will depart, for it will be merged in fruition; then hope will disappear like a bright vision, for it shall be merged in having; and then grace shall be swallowed up in glory; there shall be no more tears, nor sighing, nor sorrow; all

graves shall be filled up; the orphan's weeping face no more scarred with tear-channels; all creation's discord subdued; all nature at one with itself and at one with God; and earth a vestibule of heaven; heaven and earth eternally one! What a blessed day! humanity pines for it; creation groans and travails till this kingdom consume all other kingdoms, and flourish for ever. The slave in the mines of Siberia longs for it; the slave in the Southern States of America cries for it; the poor needle-woman, the greatest slave of all, earning a half-penny or a penny per hour, as I have myself witnessed, sighs and cries for it. Let them have patience and pray on; it will come. God hears the cry of the oppressed, the groans of nature, the petitions of his saints; and the kingdom shall come, and "it shall not be destroyed, nor left to other people, but break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." Its light shall never be quenched, for God is its illumination; its life shall never be extinguished, for God is its everlasting life. Sublime thought! that from the lonely and sequestered villages of Bethlehem and Nazareth there has come forth a kingdom whose triumphs multiply every day, whose glories shall fill the whole earth, whose expanding and progressive spring is God the Omnipotent; a kingdom that will shine when marble statues are defaced, and when palaces, and noble halls, and thrones, and dynasties are ground to powder and scattered as the chaff upon the summer threshing-floor. That kingdom is at our doors; that bright epoch comes speedily. Are you interested in it? Have you a share in it? Are you subjects of it? Are you born again?

My dear friends, what an awful thing if that kingdom should come in all its glory, and we should find ourselves excluded. What a terrible thing, if, when the trumpet shall sound (and we know not when it may sound), and the dead in every churchyard shall rise,—if from a grave where there are twain, one shall be taken and one left. And then, we that are alive, it is said, shall be caught up in the air. Oh, what a terrible separation will it be for one of a family, on hearing the royal sound, to assume

mysterious wings, and soar, and come to Jesus, and the other to be left! And yet I am not describing a picture of fancy; I am stating what God himself has said. How dreadful the separation! We now mourn over the loss of those that fall asleep in Jesus; what a terrible shock will it be when we find those that we loved upon earth severed from us for ever and for ever! Why is it, my dear friends, that we are not Christians? Why are we not the people of God? Why are we not trying to make others so? There is no reason outside you. There is only one—you *will* not. Your inability is moral. There is not the least reason why every man in this assembly may not go home this night and bow his heart before God and be at peace with him through Jesus Christ. Recollect the serpent of brass. The dying Israelite had but to look: the instant he looked he had physical life. As Moses lifted up the serpent, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him, looketh to him, leans upon him as a Saviour, may have instant life. May we have this kingdom within us; may we be its subjects, and so be the subjects of the kingdom of the Lord, for Christ's sake. Amen.

LECTURE IX.

EARLY MARTYRS.

“*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the King, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.*”—DANIEL iii. 16.

You will recollect that I explained in a series of successive discourses that remarkable image which appeared to Nebuchadnezzar, of gold, silver, brass, and iron, and then the ten toes, representing ten kingdoms, mixed with iron and with clay, and incapable, by any pressure applied to them, of coalescing and mingling. I showed you that all this is so minutely described in prophecy has been exactly fulfilled in history; that man's history, written by man's pen, is the echo of God's prophecy inspired by God's Spirit; and that the strongest, because accumulating evidence that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, is not in the record of the miracles that were done, or in the sublimity and purity of the truths that were uttered, but in the continuous fulfilment of those ancient prophecies in the years as they roll past before us.

We now come to another stage in the incidents connected with Daniel himself—not connected with prophecy, but with personal character. I may, however, notice that Daniel's exposition of the image made the king raise him to the highest dignity, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego also to the highest honour. But one grieves to see how short-lived is the patronage of man; for we find by the preceding chapter that the men who were the objects of royal adoration yesterday are the objects of his fury and his vengeance to-day. Truly we are not to trust in princes nor in man's son.

I may here notice the meaning of what I omitted to explain in my last lecture, that Daniel sat in the gate of the king (chap. ii. 49.) You must have observed that in the Bible, gates are frequently referred to: "He sat in the gate." "Judgment in the gate." "Honoured among the elders in the gate." So Daniel was seated in the gate. The gate of a city in ancient times was the place from which justice was dispensed; it was a strong place, and was specially guarded; and to put Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the gate, was to make them counsellors, and judges, and rulers in the midst of the land. The only country that retains anything like a memorial of this usage is Turkey. You know the phrase used in the newspapers, when they refer to Turkish decisions—the "sublime *Porte*,"—a word derived from *porta*, which means a gate. It is simply the remains of an ancient eastern custom, or Oriental usage, retained in a modern tongue, and connecting the world that now is with the rites and customs of a world that is passed away.

In the chapter I have read, we find that Nebuchadnezzar raised a golden image of prodigious height. He tried to captivate all to worship it by the sounds of music, the dulcimer, and flute, and various instruments; and he warned them that if his music would not prevail, his furnace would be sure to punish all recusants; so that if they were not captivated, he would try to force them; and if he did not force them, he would take care to burn them. How like Popery!

It appears that certain Chaldeans and counsellors applied to the king—men who envied the dignity of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego—and informed him that there were Jewish parties who had dared to disobey his commands. He sends for them, speaks to them in very reasonable terms, warns them of what they had done, and the consequences that would follow, but unexpectedly receives from them the magnanimous and noble reply: "We are not careful, O king, it is not a matter of anxiety to us, to answer thee; our minds are fully made up; we know what is duty, and in the face of

kings, and amid the prospect of a fiery furnace, we have grace to stand by it."

This image set up by Nebuchadnezzar, some think, was meant to be an imitation of the splendid image which he saw in a dream. An image passed before him to give him a foresight of the fate of the kingdoms of the world; but instead of learning prophetic wisdom from it, which was its legitimate use, he makes a copy of it—a copy that seems, to his taste, to excel the original—and sets it up as an idol, or an object of worship. It is a singular fact, that all false religion is not original; it is only the corruption of the true: and we may calculate the height, the depth, and substance of the true religion by the false religion which follows it; just as men estimate the height of the pyramids by the length of the shadows they cast around them. This king used the image which he saw, and which God meant for a sublime and good purpose, to be a model for an idol, which was to take the place that belonged to God alone; just as the Israelites took the brass serpent, which had a most beneficent mission according to God's appointment, and made it an object of worship. Never, never is corruption so great as when it is the corruption of that which is pure. Popery is thus more corrupt than heathenism; an angel falling becomes a fiend; a woman falling from her dignity and purity becomes the most degraded of all; and pure rites and ordinances perverted by the wickedness of man become the most deadly vehicles of dishonour to God and injury to mankind. Take the sacrament of baptism, and make it occupy the place of the Holy Spirit; and you do what the Israelites did with the brass serpent, what Nebuchadnezzar did with the golden image: you lift it from its true and its beautiful position—a sign, a seal, and an introduction to the visible Church—and you put it in the room of God, and make it sit in the Temple of God, in antichristian state, showing itself that it is God.

Most likely, the cause of the king's acting thus was not so much his love of idolatry as the cunning advice of his counsellors around him. They saw that Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abed-nego, were raised to honour ;—they were envious of the dignity to which these great and good men were exalted. They, therefore, hit upon the scheme of ensnaring them by getting the king to erect a god for universal worship, which they knew too well, because they knew the substance and depth of these men's religion, they would never consent to adore. Party spirit is the bitterest of all : it has done what nothing else in the history of man can do ; but it is a lesson to those who indulge in it, that wherever in the Bible it has been made to act against the people of God, it has recoiled in its action, and injured or destroyed those who used it. These men tried to destroy Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and they were destroyed themselves. It seems to be a great law or ordinance in God's dispensations with mankind, that they that shed blood, their blood shall be shed ; that they that wield the sword shall fall by the sword ; that no man can smite another without being smitten himself ; nor any man curse another without receiving the echo and rebound of that curse immediately into his own bosom. Let us pray for kings, that they may have grace not to set up idols ; let us pray for their ministers and counsellors, that they may have grace to give them good advice. A king has power ; and when that power is allied to goodness, it is all but divine ; when that power is allied to wickedness, it is as disastrous as it is sinful.

The image is here described to be of a certain measurement—threescore cubits in height, and in breadth six cubits. Anybody can see that this is a disproportionate measurement, and that an image which was sixty cubits (about ninety feet) in height, and only six cubits (or nine feet) in breadth, would be utterly disproportionate. It is plain, therefore, that this is—if I may reverently use the expression—a loose way of describing the image and pedestal together, the united height of both being ninety feet. Herodotus, the father of history, alludes to a golden image that was set up at Babylon, which he himself had heard of, and which every one was obliged to kiss before he entered the city. And we know, from

classic story, that at Rhodes there was an image of gold seventy cubits in height—ten cubits higher than this one—and that it took thirteen years to construct it, or put together its different molten parts; and on its being thrown down by an earthquake, such was its weight, that it ploughed up the solid earth, and buried itself to a considerable extent beneath the ground. I quote these facts to show that the incidents here recorded are attested by heathen historians; that in heathen history itself we have a parallel case; and that such images were not unusual, nor impossible to be constructed by ancient art.

This image, you read, in the next place, was made completely of gold. One can well conceive what a splendid object it must have been. It was incapable of being oxidised by the rains and the atmosphere, and therefore it perpetually retained its splendour in that eastern and purer climate. No doubt, the king depended for popular adoration upon the splendour of the image, thinking its brilliancy and grandeur would be an attraction irresistible to all men. It seems to be the law of false religion that, having no inner moral beauty, it must depend upon outward trappings, pomp, and splendour, for its weightiest claims; so much so that whenever we see a church begin to heap up splendid pomps and ceremonies, gorgeous robes, magnificent rites, it should always lead us to suspect that that church is aware that the inner beauty is evaporated, and that the outer beauty must be increased and augmented, in order to conceal its loss and make it attractive. So it is with that great apostasy in the West. The Church of Rome depends for her power, not upon the purity of her creed, not upon the greatness and holiness of her morality, but upon the splendour of her rites, her crucifixes, her genuflexions, her golden shrines, her embroidered altars, her august and impressive temples: like the ancient temples of Egypt, all magnificent as architecture could make them without, but inside are the reptiles of the Nile, the gods the people bow down to.

In order to make the image as impressive as possible, the king collected around it a great band of musicians,

with all sorts of instruments of music. He knew the charm, the power, and popular effect of good music; and he was resolved, that not only should the image have unwonted splendour by being golden, and thus reflecting the rays of rising and setting suns, but that it should also have near it all that is impressive and attractive in the shape of beautiful music. Painting and statuary are for the eye; music for the ear. Thus he thought he would be sure to make his way to the heart. Some one has sarcastically remarked, that if you can secure the five senses of men, you may calculate upon all the rest. What was said in sarcasm has too often been fulfilled in fact. Men are too often led by their senses, not by their judgment; they worship show, not in spirit and truth. The church of Rome is aware of this fact, and has made provision for man's senses in a most wonderful manner; calculating, with masterly sagacity, that, having secured the homage of all the senses by her adaptations to them, she will, in nine cases out of ten, secure the conversion of the mind and the homage of the heart.

These three Jews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, as I have already said, were accused as guilty. They felt they had no alternative: they refused to bow down and worship the image the king had set up. It was not on account of veneration for their own idolatry that the Chaldeans accused them; it was envy, jealousy, hatred, and all uncharitableness. When the king hears of their disobedience, he sends for them, speaks to them with condescending courtesy and kindness, and asks them the reason why they had refused to worship the image that he had set up. He had no idea that a man had a conscience—not the least idea that there was a word mightier and more impressive than a king's word; and he thought it the most monstrous, and perhaps the most extraordinary phenomenon he had met with in all his reign, that any man should refuse to obey a king's command, and refuse in circumstances where obedience was entitled to so much favour, and where disobedience would be visited with so severe and terrible a penalty.

The three Hebrew youths calmly, courteously, but firmly, refused. They were not insolent to the king; they did not insult his creed; they were prepared to argue with him, no doubt, if he condescended to permit them; they used no offensive epithets, but they calmly and firmly said: "We cannot do it; it is with us a matter of conscience." Conscience is that sacred realm, even in the bosom of the lowliest, into which a king's hand may not dare to enter; it is that sequestered, solemn, awful nook in the constitution of the human soul, into which God alone can claim admission. Kings may control the body; they cannot make or alter the convictions of the soul. Force may make bad men hypocrites; but no force or fraud can make good men disobey the behests of conscience and the commandments of their God. There is nothing beneath God and the Bible so sacred as the conscience; and there is no one faculty within us to which we should listen with more reverential and attentive awe. It may be blinded, it may be warped, it may be hardened, it may be seared, but it is never utterly dead; and a day always comes when, if long neglected, long seared, long disregarded, it re-asserts its ancient and inherent rights, ascends to its own sacred pulpit, and reasons, in tones of thunder, of righteousness, and judgment, and temperance; and man must hear it.

The king, finding these three youths determined, seeing that they could not be captivated by his music, nor persuaded by his reasons, to worship the image, threatens them with the burning fiery furnace seven times heated. Such is invariably the last resource of a false religion. It will try, first, to captivate by its charms, and if it fail, it will then endeavour to coerce by its threats. But the same conscience that smiled at the seductions of the music will triumph over the threatenings of wrath. The seven times heated furnace has no terrors for that man who knows that the ever-living God is his friend, and eternity his happy and blessed home. Tertullian, in speaking of the treatment of Christians by the Roman emperors of his day—that is, in the days of heathenism, says: "We are thrown to the wild beasts to make us

recant; we are burned in the flame; we are condemned to the mines; we are banished to the islands, such as Patmos;—‘and all have failed.’ ” So was it here: the sovereign’s frown created no terror in these young men’s breasts. They felt the force of duty; their eye was single; their path was plain; their course was marked out before them. How absurd is persecution, in whatever way you look at it! No punishment inflicted on the body can possibly alter the convictions of the soul. One wonders man can think so. If a man were all body, persecution might make him what the persecutor pleased; but man is soul and body, and no maltreatment of the one ought, or is able, to warp the judgment of the other. The soul is to be dealt with by argument, by evidence, by love; the body, being either pleased or punished, can exercise no real influence over it.

In the conduct of these Hebrew youths we have a great precedent for ourselves to follow in less painful circumstances. We should rather suffer, and if needs be, die, than renounce the Gospel. It is a strong statement, but it is a scriptural one. St. Paul says: I am ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” Perhaps it is not right to say to men in these times of so great civil freedom; “You should be prepared to die for the Gospel. Perhaps to ask you to test your present Christianity by your readiness at a future time to die for it, is not fair, scriptural, or necessary. I believe, when martyrs are required, God gives a martyr’s spirit to meet the requirement. God’s grace is also sufficient for the crisis; it is not given in excess before the crisis comes. The great question we have to ask is, Are we truly the children of God? Are we, in heart and conviction, the followers of the Lamb? Are we washed in his most precious blood? Are we leaning upon his most perfect righteousness? Are we looking to God as our Father? Are we anticipating the glory to be revealed as our home?” If we can make sure of this, we need not now consider whether we could die for Christ. When the exigency arrives that will require us to do so, the God

that permits the crisis in his Providence will supply the strength in his grace; and you will find it amply sufficient for you.

How composed and beautiful was the remark of these Hebrew youths: "The God whom we serve is able to deliver us; if he does not, well; we commit ourselves to a faithful God." As if they had said: "If he miraculously deliver us, it is well; if he do not, we know it is equally well. It will be but the torture of a moment; an exceeding weight of an eternal glory is beyond it. We do not like the the fire; we have nerves as well as Nebuchadnezzar; we have sensibilities as keen; we shrink from torture, as all humanity must shrink; but we are willing to brave the flame for the glory that lies beyond it; we are willing to cross the deep, dark flood of death for the sake of the bright land of Goshen, that stretches in perpetual sunshine on the other side. We do not love death, nor do we wish death; but we are willing to bear it for what death leads to." When you hear persons say, "We wish to die," their language is not correct. No man wishes to die. I have said before, that of all things death is the most horrible, the most unnatural, the thing from which we naturally and properly shrink and recoil; because man was never made to die. Sin has brought in "death and all our woe." But the Christian says: "I am willing to meet death either as a foe to hurl defiance at, or as a friend, to welcome the message and the messenger too; not because I love that friend, or because I court that foe, but because in either case he is a pioneer that paves and opens the way for me to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." These youths said: "The God whom we serve is *able* to deliver us; and we know that if it be for his glory he will deliver us." They placed the whole stress upon God's ability. Satan would say of miracles, "Let God never interfere to deliver;" Man would say, "Let God always interfere to deliver;" God has determined in his wisdom to interfere when it is most for his glory, and best for you. Were God always to deliver his servants by a perpetual

miracle, it would not be a miracle ; it would be called—to use the phraseology of the day—“a law of nature.” Were God never to deliver his servants, then the world would say, and Christians would begin almost to think, “There is no God.” He interposes miraculously often enough to convince that God is, and God acts ; and he interposes seldom enough to make more vivid the interposition as an evidence of a divine and Providential power. I need not say that a ceaseless miracle is, by its very necessity, no miracle at all. The present law is, that water should run down-hill ; but if the law were that it should run up-hill, and if it had been so for eighteen centuries, men would say, “For water to run up-hill is a law of nature ;” and if anything occurred to make it run down-hill, they would say, “This is a miracle.” The present law is, that the vine should be planted, that the rain should saturate the soil in which it grows, that the juice should rise through the stem and go into the branches and the leaves, that it shall effloresce into blossom, and ripen into fruit ; that the fruit shall be pressed, the juice fermented, and be converted into wine. But Christ, by one word, shortened the process ; and instead of taking a year to allow the water to turn into wine, which is the ordinary law, he did it in a minute, saying, “Let the water be wine.” But if water always became wine by the looking of a man, that would be a law, and the other process would be the miracle. What is continuous is called the law ; the suspension of the continuity indicates the interposition of the Lawgiver. A ceaseless miracle, then, is an absurdity. Therefore the idea of that body of Christians, who have followed the late Edward Irving, or improved or misimproved, upon what he said—that there should be ceaseless miracles in the church, is to me absurd ; it will not bear examination ; it cannot be, by the very nature and necessity of the thing.

We read, that when the king had failed to convince, or to awe, or seduce these youths, he ordered the furnace, in his fury, to be heated seven-fold. The means of doing so were very easy in that country. The whole soil of Babylon to this day is full of naphtha and bitumen. They

had only to collect the brush-wood of the forests, and to cast in plenty of this naphtha and bitumen (as an ancient historian says was done), and the heat of the furnace, as any one must be aware, would become highly intense—or, as it is here said, be seven-fold.

The three youths were then cast into the fire, with their hosen and their clothes on, as the last and most desperate punishment the furious monarch could inflict. But God forgets not his own. At this crisis God was true to his promise, beheld in love his servants, and interposed for their deliverance. The flame recognised the presence of Him that made it, and bowed reverently before the Son of God, just as on other occasions the waters of the sea owned him; the winds heard him; and all nature responded to him, and obeyed him. The flame lost its power to consume, because it was commanded not to do so by Him that kindled it at the first. Nature is all pliant in the hand of Jesus. He is the Lord of creation; he has but to speak, and all things will respond in ten thousand echoes, "Speak, Lord, thy servants hear." These Hebrew youths, we are told by the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "quenched the violence of fire" by their faith. They said nothing calculated to irritate the king, as I have told you; they submitted meekly to the judgment he decreed, and cast the whole stress of their deliverance upon the Lord. Let me gather, then, from all this these lessons.

The mightiest on earth learn here, and have learned often since, how insignificant are the greatest efforts to injure the cause of Christ.

If you will read the history of the Church of Christ, you will find that the most furious opposition has only served to spread its principles, and to add new attractions to those that professed them. All the power of earth and hell cannot burn out one single truth; all the patronage of earth and hell cannot build up one permanent lie. It is God's great law that all things, directly or indirectly, shall build up truth; and that nothing upon earth shall serve permanently to build up a lie. The Hebrew youths walked in the burning fire as amid

groves of orange and of myrtle, while one walked with them, like unto the Son of God—no doubt the Angel of the Covenant. The fury of the king was disappointed; the party-spirit of his ministers was checked; and they that kindled the fire were themselves the first victims of it.

In looking at the conduct of these three youths, I may notice, that they might have urged, that it was their duty to obey the king, and worship the image he had set up; for it was the established religion of the country. So it unquestionably and, in this case, unhappily was. The king patronised the idol, and, no doubt, its worshippers; and these youths might have argued, as some men argue still: "It is the established religion; it enjoys the sunshine of the countenance of the monarch; and as loyal subjects, it becomes us to embrace it." Whatever be the excellence, the merit, or the demerit of established religion, we should learn this: that the mere establishment of a creed—whether doing so be right or the reverse, it is needless now to discuss—is not necessarily the making of truth a lie, or the making of a lie truth. Mahometanism is established in Turkey; but it is not, therefore, my duty to become a Mahometan there. Popery is established in Austria; but it is not, therefore, my duty to become a Papist there. Pantheism, or the endowment of everything upon earth that assumes the name of religion, is established in France; but it is not my duty to become a Pantheist, or to worship in the temple of the province in which I may be placed in France. Let religion be established by the powers that be, which they think true; but let me be regarded as having a conscience. If I cannot conform to the religion that is established by law, either from conscientious conviction, or from God's word, or from scrupulosity, as is the case with some, let me have the freedom—the full, unfettered freedom of worshipping beneath my own vine and my own fig-tree, according to the prescriptions of that conscience which kings can neither bind nor free, which laughs at sword and fire, and glories only in subjection to God its Sovereign. Because, then, it was

the established religion, it was not therefore, their duty to conform to it. Nor did they cease to be loyal subjects, because they would not be the churchmen of that day. It is possible to be churchmen, and to be most disloyal; it is possible to be a dissenter, and to be most loyal. Our conformity to the established church, however excellent, is not necessary to our loyalty; our non-conformity to the established church, however bad, is not necessarily disloyalty. In religious matters the laws should leave us free; in civil matters, the law of Cæsar ought to be, not for wrath, but for conscience' sake, reverently obeyed. I am not here speaking against a religious establishment, but against the abuse of it.

These Hebrew youths might have urged also the highest possible expediency for bowing down and worshipping the image. Mark how they were situated. They were captives in the midst of Babylon; they were promoted to places of power; they had great means of doing good to their captive countrymen in the midst of the city of their habitation; and if they had belonged to the expediency-mongers of every age and country, they might have argued in this way: "True, it is very bad to bow down and worship this image; but we hold places of power; we have excellent salaries; we have great influence; we may be the means of doing good to our poor captive fellow-countrymen. Had we not better, therefore, bow the body, though we do not bow the soul, to this golden image?" If it had been a matter of form, or ceremony, a matter of discipline or ritual, then I would have said, "Remain in the communion in which you can do the greatest good;" but as it was a matter that touched the conscience; and as that conscience responded to what God said, "Thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them," these three Hebrew youths had no choice. They did what was right, and feared not that the right would be always the most expedient. Do what is right, and you will always find it expedient. That cannot be politically expedient which is morally wrong. It is God's law plainly unfolded in his word. Do not look behind you, nor before you, nor above you, nor

around you ; but be satisfied that all things will work for good to you, while you continue to act aright. Duty alone is ours ; all the region beyond it—the region of events and consequences—is exclusively God's. We are to mind the duty that devolves upon us ; we are to leave with God to settle the issues that may flow from our obedience to that duty.

There was another reason they might have urged for their conforming to the king's requirements—that was, their personal obligations. They might have argued : “He has been to us a most gracious monarch ; he has raised us, in his sovereignty, to places of high power and high honour ; he has made us sit in the gate, the place of judgment, of greatness, and of justice, and we owe homage to the king and gratitude to the man.” But duty to God was even stronger than gratitude and loyalty to an earthly king. My dear friends, there is nothing more painful than to be obliged to refuse a dear friend what our consciences tell us we cannot give. But “he that loveth father or mother,” much less a friend, “more than me, cannot be my disciple.” We must take up the cross, and follow Jesus. Do all that you can to gratify your friends ; but do nothing to irritate and disturb your peace of conscience, and the allegiance that you owe to God.

These youths might have also argued : “If we refuse to worship the golden image, we shall present a very singular aspect : it is the universal worship ; the whole mass upon the plain of Dura fall down and worship the image ; and we three shall appear the most singular and grotesque of nonconformists amid the inhabitants of mighty Babylon.” Singularity, when it is assumed, is contemptible, and indicates a very weak mind indeed. To be singular for singularity's sake is positively detestable—below the dignity of man, and unworthy of the gravity of a Christian ; but to be singular because it is the necessary result of not sinning, is worthy of the Christian, and it dignifies the man. We must not be afraid of being singular when duty makes that singularity inevitable. If it be in an excellent thing, our

singularity should not make us ashamed. Did you ever hear of any man ashamed of being singularly rich? of a woman ashamed of being singularly beautiful? of a man ashamed of being singularly wise? Is it not very odd that men should be ashamed of being singularly religious? Is not religion more beautiful than beauty? wiser than wisdom? and far more valuable than riches? Do not court singularity, but cleave to duty; do not fear singularity, if avoiding sin necessitates it. Do not mind that the multitude are against you, if God be with you. Plant your foot upon one single text of the Bible, and defy all mankind: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." "As for me and my house," be it in Constantinople, be it in Vienna,—Petersburgh, or Rome, or Babylon, or London; "as for me and my house," whatever other men may choose to do, "we will serve the Lord."

These men, too, might have pleaded the terrible penalty to which they were exposed by disobeying the commandments of the king. It was a terrible penalty; and a severe penalty for disobedience to a command so easily obeyed by a genuflexion of the knee, yet so impossible to be done by the bowing of a Christian's heart. They might have said, "It is a terrible thing to be cast into a burning fiery furnace;" but they looked at the furnace, even when it was hottest, and they looked at the duty, when it had not one advocate or follower besides them, and they chose duty—naked, simple duty; and they were not careful to answer the king how they should meet or endure the burning fiery furnace. What gratitude do we owe to God that we can be true to duty, and yet not incur such a dreadful penalty. But what rebuke does the conduct of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego administer to many of us! You think if you become Christian—it is the thought of many a young man here to-night—if you become Christian you will be—what? Thrown to the wild beasts? One might not be surprised if you hesitated.—Be cast into the burning fiery furnace. If so, one might not be surprised that you should pause. But you think only: "If I become a

Christian I shall have to give up this profit,"—that is all ; " I shall have to renounce this pleasure ; I shall have to shut up my shop on Sunday,"—that is all. And can you hesitate to comply with a clear command from God, because you will lose a little pleasure, part with a little profit, die not so rich, live not so splendidly : when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to bow the knee for once upon the plain of Dura, though doing so would have gained them a loftier place, apparently, in the favour of their king, and shielded them from the terrible penalties attached to disobedience ? What you do now indicates what you would have done if you had been added to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and been a fourth there. You would have bowed the knee, and worshipped the image, and escaped the penalty. But how will you meet Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego at the judgment-seat ? They, with less light and fewer privileges—not having heard of Calvary, its cross, its agony, its bloody sweat—not having the Gospel, in all its grace, and glory, and riches, unfolded to them—with weaker motives, less acquaintance with God, manfully refused the bribe, despised the penalty, and clung to duty ; and you, amid privileges such as the world never tasted or enjoyed before, are overcome by the bribe, repelled by the penalty ; open your shops on Sunday, cheat on the Monday, and grow rich by working to death, in thousands, the young men that serve you. How would Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego have done if they had been of your religion and your spirit ? And how will you meet them at that day when all the pageantry of kings and palaces will have passed away like a pale, airy phantasm ; and duty, conscience, responsibility, God, the Saviour, the soul, will alone stand great and blessed, or terrible realities ?

These Hebrew youths had faith in God's power : they said, " He is able to deliver us." They had faith in God's promises ; they felt that he would deliver them. Perhaps they had heard sounding on the plain of Dura that very promise which God pronounced to Isaiah about a hundred years before : " When thou passest through

the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Then, these three youths had the hope of the "glory that remains to be revealed." Some persons have tried to show that the ancient Christians, before Christ—the Christians in his twilight, as we are Christians in his dawn—had no idea of a future state, and that it is not clearly revealed in the Bible. It appears to me that the Old Testament does better than in express terms announce it; for in every sentence and verse it unequivocally implies it. If the burning fiery furnace was to be the termination of the being of these Hebrew youths, how could they have braved it? What reward or inducement was there to do so? But we are told by the Apostle, who knew what his countrymen believed—for he himself was a Hebrew, (Heb. xi. 14,) "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." "They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly." And again, speaking of Moses; "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

And now, let us learn this great lesson from all I have said—that the path of principle is always the highest possible expediency. Never do a thing because it seems expedient if it be not clearly right. Never hesitate to feel that the thing that is right in the sight of God will be the most expedient in the experience of man. God himself has said, "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." Enter the furnace, if needs be, in obedience to God, and God will deliver you. Enter Paradise itself in disobedience to God, and God will not keep you, but it will be to you more terrible in the end than the furnace seven times heated. Remember always that God

is able, and is willing to deliver you, and he will deliver you—when, how, and where it is most for his glory, and best for you.

Learn also this last lesson: Christ has been with his church from the beginning of the world. Where has the church not been? But you ask, perhaps, what is the church? The church is not a great cathedral, or a national establishment, or local denomination—Independent, Wesleyan, Episcopal, or Presbyterian. The normal idea of the church of Christ is: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” The church was once the family of Adam, and Jesus was present when Adam and Eve and Abel kneeled down before the altar of their God. The church was tossed upon the deep in the ark with Noah. The church was in Abraham’s family when he remonstrated with Lot. The church was on the plain of Dura when the three Hebrew youths stood firm. And the church was, lastly, in the burning fiery furnace when the three youths were there, and the Son of God was present in the midst of them, true to his promise: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” An architect can build a cathedral; a queen by her presence can create a palace; but the presence of the Lord of glory alone can constitute a church; and where two or three are present, there he will be. Let it be in the flood, or the fire, in the wilderness, or in the city, he will preserve it unto the last. The bush may blaze, but God is in the bush, and it cannot be consumed. His saints may suffer; but their sufferings shall only spread their faith, and glorify their Lord. And all things, the blunders of its friends, the bitterness of its enemies, the silence of its advocates, the opposition of its foes—all things, in height and depth, shall aid the cause of Christ, and prosper that church of which he is the foundation and blessed hope. Amen.

LECTURE X.

PRIDE ABASED.

“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”—DANIEL iv. 37.

PERHAPS, as I quoted all the previous chapter in my former lecture, it will be necessary now to read the greater portion of the chapter from which the text is taken,—and on which, rather than on a mere historical statement, I desire in this lecture to dwell.

We are told, that Nebuchadnezzar the king wrote an epistle “unto all people and nations and languages that dwell on the earth;” and the substance of that epistle we are told was, “Peace be multiplied to you.” He explains the ground on which he bases his statement—“I thought it good to show the signs and the wonders that the high God”—not his idol Bel, whose praises he had sung before, but “that the high God hath wrought toward me.” And then, carried away by the magnificent ideas that were before him, and by the goodness of that God who had so mercifully dealt with him, he exclaims in ecstasy, “How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is”—not like my kingdom, a frail and a fleeting one, but—“an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.” He then rehearses the main facts from which he draws the precious truths contained in this chapter, one of which I am about to unfold; he tells them, “I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.” All his enemies were sub-

ded without; all his fears were quieted within. And while he was thus "at rest in his house and flourishing in his palace," another dream, different from the one which had before glanced before his eyes in the night visions, passed before him, and his thoughts troubled him. He called all the magicians of his kingdom to whom he had been wont to look in his prosperity, and asked them to explain the marvellous vision which he had beheld. They were unable to make it understood. God always taught Nebuchadnezzar what he has so often taught us, that ail human glory must be stained, that God's alone may shine forth; that the wisdom of man—even of the magicians of the earth, must be seen and felt to be folly, in order that we may be led to drink from that fountain of wisdom which alone is pure and undefiled, and worthy of the name. Daniel, the minister of God, was again brought before Nebuchadnezzar, and was informed by him what his dream was, and required to give the solution of it. The dream was as follows:—
"I saw a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: the leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and lo, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; he cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him and let seven times pass over him." Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, explains to Nebuchadnezzar what was the meaning and

intent of the dream in these words:—"My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies." You will notice in this verse (19), that the word "be" is printed in italics; which shows that it was employed by the translators, as being supposed by them to express more freely the meaning of the original. If it be so, the sentence would seem like a sort of anathema pronounced by Daniel on the enemies of the king; but if we look at the original, we shall find that we ought to leave out "be," and then the verse would run thus:—"the dream (is) to them that hate thee," &c.—*i.e.* "it is a dream which will make glad the hearts of your enemies; because it makes sorrowful your own." It is not an imprecation of what Daniel wished on the foes of the king, but a declaration of what the foes of the king would feel when they heard of the calamities he was about to suffer. Daniel then proceeds, "The tree that thou sowest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beast of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: it is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king: that they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the

kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."

After he had heard the interpretation, and undergone the sentence of degradation, king Nebuchadnezzar thus concludes his history: "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

This closing epistle, addressed by the king Nebuchadnezzar to his subjects, breathes a quiet and a beautiful spirit, that indicates to my mind a change in his heart, a transformation of his character—a true and an actual conversion to God. We cannot but notice in this epistle, first, the great humility by which it is characterised. The pride that provoked punishment is superseded by humility, that owns its justice and gives glory to the God who punished him for his sins; and thus he shows that he felt his sin to be grievous, and his sentence to be just. You will notice, too, in the blessing which the king pronounces upon all mankind such a wish as can be ex-

pected to proceed only from a Christian's heart. The fierce monarch is changed altogether. Instead of war, he prays for peace; the hand that wielded the sword is stretched forth in benediction; the lion, fierce and ravenous is changed now into the lamb. He that blasphemed and defied the attributes of heaven, now submits like a weaned child, and owns the justice of his punishment; and prays that blessings, such as God alone can give, and monarchs cannot take away, may be bestowed upon all his subjects, and that all mankind may rejoice in the enjoyment of them.

You will notice, too, another feature in the epistle of the king—namely, the missionary feeling and missionary sympathy that pervades it. He says, "I thought it good to shew the signs and the wonders and the might he had wrought," which is only another form of expressing what David said, when he cried, "Come, all ye that fear God, and I will make known to you what he hath done for my soul." The king says, "I have seen the greatness, I have tasted the goodness of God. It is now my wish that all the people of my realm should see that I have done so; and learn that the God they are to worship is no golden image, but the God who made the heaven and the earth, and whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;" and thus the Babylonian throne became the Christian pulpit. The mighty monarch became the humble and the faithful missionary; and his epistle a sermon eloquent of wonders, of mercy, of righteousness, and of peace. Here, then, we have an evidence what grace can do; what transformations it can work; what results sanctified affliction can achieve; how blasphemies are turned into blessings, and the fierce despot into the meek and humble and submissive saint. And the same grace that changed the heart of the Babylonian monarch can and will change the heart of the most depraved of mankind. That grace, like the air of heaven, can enter by the smallest cranny, and can achieve by the smallest means the greatest possible results. It has found, and it will find, access into congress, divan and cabinet, and family. It will find its way into the temple of Braham,

—into the mosque of Islam,—into the cathedral of the Romanist. Wherever there is a heart that beats, there grace can find a throne for its blessed supremacy.

The dream of the king, which we have read, and which Daniel interpreted, was a beautiful one. A lofty tree was seen planted in the centre of the earth; herds and cattle from a thousand hills enjoyed shelter beneath its branches, and the birds of the air built their nests amid its boughs. Such is the symbol of a prosperous and happy king. Nations dwelt beneath his sovereignty; families found peace beneath his sceptre; his kingdom was rooted in the hearts of his loyal subjects; a spectacle too magnificent for man long to enjoy elated the monarch's heart; drew out the corruption of his nature, and prompted the exclamation which brought down the vengeance of heaven: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" The instant that he utters these thoughts, the sentence is issued that fells the tree, deposes and degrades the monarch of whom that tree was the symbol. So true is it in every age, "I have seen the wicked great in power, and spreading himself as a green bay-tree; I passed by, and lo! he was not; I sought him, but he could not be found." And again, God says, "All the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high heart." The catastrophe of the monarch is the result that is here foreshadowed in the hewing down of the tree. The sceptre is shattered in his hand. The mighty ruler is driven to herd with the lowest cattle—the monarch of that mighty kingdom goes out a wretched and an unreasoning monomaniac; the inmate of a palace becomes an inhabitant of the desert; he that ate king's meat feeds with the beasts of the field; and he whose brow wore a diadem that reflected splendour upon a thousand kings, is naked and wetted with the dews of heaven. "Hew it down; cut away its branches; shake off its fruit." Thus there are two ways in which God can punish kings, just as there are two ways in which he can punish their subjects. He can drive the monarch

from his realm, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar; or he can drive the kingdom from the monarch, as in the case of Belshazzar. So with the subjects, he can snatch the landlord from his estate, and place him at the judgment-seat; or he can snatch the estate from the landlord, and leave him poor and friendless in the world. The one or the other of these results will follow whenever pride is indulged. It is a law as sure as that the sun shines by day, that pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Let a church be proud and boast of itself, and that church will soon be laid low. Let a man become elated and exalted by a sense of his talents, and he will soon be brought down. Let a people glory in their wealth, or glory in their wisdom, or in anything but Christ, and they will soon learn, that he who tries to steal a ray from the glory of God takes a withering curse inwardly into his own bosom.

Such, however, we find, is the goodness of God, that before he strikes he warns. And therefore Daniel says, "Moreover, O king, let my counsel be acceptable before thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thy transgressions by shewing mercy to the poor." In the Roman Catholic Bible, this verse is translated, "O king, redeem thy sins by righteousness:" and hence, it is a favourite text, quoted very frequently by them in order to show that good works have a propitiatory or atoning virtue. But the translation that they have adopted is obviously wrong. The word is, properly translated, "break off;" and what Daniel says to the king is equivalent to saying, "Cease to do evil; learn to do well; reverse the course you have taken; show your repentance in the sight of God by your reformation in the sight of man. Be what you have failed to be; bring forth the fruits that you have not brought forth; pity the poor you have trodden under foot; abstain from the violence which peradventure has stained you." But it would be impossible for man, by any works of his own, to make atonement for himself; for "by deeds of law," we are told, "can no flesh be justified." If man could make atonement for man's sins, why was it necessary that God

should become man, and should suffer and die, that his sins might be atoned for? But the idea is too absurd to require me to spend time in refuting it.

Among the lessons we learn from this chapter, before we enter immediately on the elucidation of the text, the first is, that the end of all royal government is beautifully set forth by the symbol of a tree, giving shelter to some, a home to others, and protection to all. What should a nation's government be? A government that protects the weak and provides for the poor; that gives a shelter to the oppressed and diffuses the greatest possible amount of freedom and happiness among all. We learn in the next place, from God's hearing Nebuchadnezzar, that God hears the whisper in the royal cabinet as well as the groan of the oppressed in a miserable cellar. It is here stated that the king was walking in his palace, and he said within himself, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?" God hears the thought of the heart—"Thou God seest me," may be said by every individual here this evening. God's eye is just as closely riveted upon the heart of that young man or that young woman, as if that young man or young woman were the only individual in the whole universe of God. There is not a thought that flutters in our hearts—there is not a purpose in them formed for to-morrow—there is not a secret spring of wickedness arising in any bosom—there is not a design that is cherished in the secrecy of any heart, that you can hide from God—from that eye that pierces the darkness—from that ear that hears in silence—from that God who will bring every secret thing to light, and judge according to the thoughts of the heart, the words of the mouth, and the deeds done in the body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil. What a solemn consideration it is that those thoughts which you would wish to conceal from that person who sits beside you in the pew, are known to God: and your schemes, plans, and imaginations that you would not disclose to a mother, to a husband, to a wife, to a child, to a friend, for the whole world, are known to him! You wrap your mantle round you, and you say, "How

close and how secret can I keep my counsel!" God's burning eye is fixed upon it all—that eye which sees and searches and penetrates all space, and reads clearly and legibly our inmost thoughts. What an idea is this, that, in the judgment-day, man's secret thoughts will be set in the light of God's countenance! What a fearful spectacle for those that rise from the dead as lost souls, when they behold that terrible light which has no shadow, no relief, nothing to soften its intense brilliancy, shining upon every thought in the past, every prospect in the future, every feeling in the present—a spectacle so fearful that the lost souls shall cry to the everlasting hills to hide them, and the great sea to shelter them from the wrath of the Lamb. And blessed, blessed indeed is that man's soul that can say, then and there, "I am guilty, but Jesus is my Saviour; I am a sinner, but that precious blood is my plea; I am lost in Adam, but retrieved in Christ: and I know that he to whom I have committed all will behold not me, for in me there is nothing worthy of love, but behold my substitute, and me in him, that died for me and became sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The king, we are told in this passage, was driven from his throne to wander with the beasts of the field, degraded and deposed, as the appropriate penalty of his special sin. What was the king's special sin? Pride. What was God's Providential punishment? Degradation. Generally speaking, you may read your sin in the light of your punishment. Not always, but generally speaking, the punishment is just the rebound of the sin. And if you will examine it very carefully in the light of God's truth, in the punishment or chastisement which you are now undergoing, you will probably be able to trace the reason why God has inflicted it. God sends the punishment, not simply to wean you from the way that is evil, but to reveal by the light of the furnace in which he places you, the sin that has seduced you, and drawn down upon you, like the conductor, the lightning of God's judgment. Was not this the case with the recent pestilence that visited us? In the punishment we saw

one sin, at least, that brought it down—the neglect of the poor—the absence of all sanatory reform—one of the greatest social evils of the present day. We saw thus in our punishment the sin which, as a people, we had indulged. There were other sins, I dare say, many others; but this was one which the judgment directly pointed out to us. And I trust we shall show that the punishment has been sanctified to us, by every man in his place discharging manfully the special duty to the poor that clearly devolves upon him.

It is stated also, that the king acknowledged, after his punishment, that “God doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.” God has not simply “prescience,” but he has “purpose.” It is not true simply that God *foreknows* what will come to pass; but, if the Bible speaks truth, as we know it does, he also purposes the event that is to take place. Prophecy is holy men becoming the amanuenses of God’s truth; history is holy and unholy men becoming the amanuenses of God’s Providence. God writes the prophecy in Scripture, and God fulfils the prophecy in history; and yet, when he does so, God is not the author of sin. God, though the author of all that is good, is not the author of anything that is sinful: nor is man a mere automaton impelled irresistibly in its course; but he is a rational, reflecting, responsible being, deliberately choosing what he thinks to be best or most expedient for him.

We learn another lesson from this history: that prosperity is a very dangerous position. It is not the man who has lost his property who is most likely to forget God; but the man who has obtained a fortune, or made a most successful speculation, or had left to him a large property. It is not the empty cup that we have any difficulty in holding: it requires the utmost nicety to balance the cup that is full to the brim. Adversity may depress; but prosperity elevates us to presumption. And if, as I have often told you, you ought to intimate that the prayers of the congregation are requested for a member of this Church in deep affliction, you ought

much oftener to say that the prayers of the congregation are requested for a member who has been visited with great prosperity. Depend upon it that the latter needs prayer just as much as the former. In the valleys, where all is shadow, we can walk securely. On the lofty pinnacle, where all is sunshine, we need a special power to keep us, a special arm to sustain us. If we take the experience of the church of Christ, we shall find that the man that draws closest to God has generally had the least of the blessings of his Providence. The Scotch fir-tree is, to my mind, the best symbol of the Christian. The least of earth is required for its roots; it finds nourishment in a dry soil and amid barren rocks, and yet, green in winter as in summer, it towers the highest of all the trees of the wood towards the sky, and with least of earth makes the greatest approach to heaven. So it is with the tree of God's planting: with the least of earth about its roots it towers the nearest to heaven; deriving nourishment, not from the earth below, but from the sunbeams that fall upon it, and the rain-drops that sprinkle it, supported by that hidden nourishment that comes from God.

We learn from Daniel's address to the king, that a minister of the Gospel ought to be faithful. Daniel told the king honestly the whole truth and was not afraid. Truth needs not to be prefaced with apology. If what the minister says be not true, no apology can palliate it; if it be true, an apology is not required. When the minister speaks God's blessed word, he ought to know but two classes—those that are sinners by nature, and those that are saved by grace. Whatever be their rank, their age, their wisdom, their renown, we have nothing to do with these—we have only to do with this, that they belong to that great category which has had so continuous a succession—the category of sinners; or to that blessed one that shall never fail—the company of God's faithful, redeemed, and regenerated people.

We learn also from the experience of the monarch, the blessings of affliction. Nebuchadnezzar said, after his affliction, what he had never dreamed of submitting

to think of before; and I have no doubt, he could say as sincerely as David said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." When God hides the sun by day, he reveals to us a thousand suns by night. It is in the dark that we see a vision which the day refuses to present to us. It is in afflictions that we learn lessons which we never could have learned in prosperity. And you know that on a sick-bed, in the moment of an expected wreck, in the hour of bitter and sorrowful bereavement, feelings were created, emotions felt, vows were uttered, (and if they were uttered, do you hold to them still?) resolutions cherished, that made you say, If it be bitter in experience to be afflicted, it is blessed in the result. The storms of winter, the frosts and winds of autumn, strip the tree of its foliage and clothe it with icicles; but it is while the tree is thus shaken and laid bare by the tempest that it strikes its roots deeper into the earth, seeking warmth and shelter below, as it loses warmth and shelter above. And then, next spring, it comes forth with greater energy, casts out its foliage with greater beauty, and is prepared to meet and master succeeding storms with far easier victory. So it is with the Christian: it is during the winter of affliction that he strengthens himself.

But the great lesson we are to learn from this chapter, and which is the lesson inculcated in my text, is the last; it is a lesson which is precious indeed, and one which God has been inculcating ever since the world began—"Those which walk in pride, God is able to abase." The whole history of God's dealings with mankind is a commentary on this text. Man once started on the wings of pride: he tried in paradise to soar to heaven: his frail wings were dissolved by the blaze of that sun as he rose: he fell: the terrible retribution came: and he learned, in the cold projected shadow of the curse, that "them that exalt themselves, God is able to abase." And after man thus fell, we have to see whether he learned in his ruin the lesson he would not learn in the time of his happiness, and in his state of innocence. Cain rose before God, and raised a fratricidal

hand against his brother in the exercise of that very pride which had brought the curse into the world, and death, "and all our woe:" and Cain went forth with this inscription, legible to heaven, upon his scathed brow, "Them that walk in pride, God is able to abase."

After Cain, we read that the daughters of the sons of God united themselves with the sons of men; society was dissolved; profligacy overflowed; they set their faces against heaven, and cried, "Who is Lord over us?" And God saw that the pride and wickedness of men were great; the windows of the heaven and the fountains of the earth were opened; the sky poured down rain, and earth poured out floods; and the ark, careering with its favoured exceptions on the crests of the waves, revealed the great truth which was here disclosed to Nebuchadnezzar, "Them that walk in pride, God is able to abase."

And even after this, while man had the remains of wrecks, and the evidences of restoration before him, instead of being humbled by the recollection of the past, and trustful in the God who saves the meek, they began to build a tower whose top should reach to the heaven, standing upon which they might laugh at such judgments, and defy the Almighty to his face. He breathed upon them, and each tongue spake confusion; no man understood what his fellow-labourer said; the work was arrested, the attempt failed, and man was again taught the truth he is so slow to learn, "Them that walk in pride, God is able to abase."

A new period came in the history of the world, and God resolved to quell the pride that still oozed out, not instantly crushing man by the direct expression of stupendous power, but by the operation of the very sin of pride preparing and promoting the destruction of him who is its victim. We find in the history of the world great kingdoms beginning to emerge, splendid palaces built, temples raised to Ashtaroth and Baal, and shrines to Isis and Osiris, throughout all the empires of the world; on which God makes the text actual, no longer by the sudden stroke of almighty power, but by the sure,

though slow operation of those very principles that have influenced the men themselves. For Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar, and Cyrus, and Alexander, and Cæsar, all found, though they were not smitten down by the thunderbolt because of their pride, yet that the higher they soared, only the deeper and the more disastrously did they fall: and never did nation succeed in writing on the productions of its wisdom or on the expressions of its power, "I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow;" and, "I am the eternal city, and of my kingdom there shall be no end;" before another hand shot through the cloud and inscribed below man's inscription and prophecy of eternity for himself, God's record of the doom he should suffer, "Mene, mene, tekcl, upharsin," "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." And ever as man said, "I will ascend to heaven, and fix my throne amid the stars of God,"—wherever that was said and the attempt made, we see no longer the glorious procession of splendour, of power, and of victory, but the funeral procession that moves slowly and sadly to the tomb. And, in the history of the world, as often as great systems have arisen, which have thrust out God and put in man, the same great result has invariably followed. What is Mahometanism? A compound of Christianity, Judaism, and heathenism, all tending to glorify an ambitious impostor and to dishonour God. The dried Euphrates, the waning crescent, all are teaching, and will teach soon with tremendous power, "Them that walk in pride, God is able to abase." And what is Popery? The magnifying of the priest till he takes the place of God, and sits in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God, and professing himself to be the Vicar of Christ. And what is said of him? "Whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming," that it may be seen that that Church which boasts itself eternal is most temporary, and that he who sits as if he were the Lord in the temple is but an usurper of a throne that belongs not to him, and the wearer of assumptions which are only blasphemy in him

that assumes them. Let it be the autocrat on his throne, or the mob in the *ἀγορά*; let it be Nebuchadnezzar in his palace, or antichrist in his temple, it is God's great law—sure as the heavens, lasting as his word,—that “them that walk in pride, God is able to abase.” The loftiest cedar of Lebanon shall be smitten down; the highest oaks of Bashan God is able to uproot. He has brought down the mighty from their seats, and exalted the humble and meek.

We read what are some of the elements of human pride in that beautiful passage in Jeremiah: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches.” And wherever there is glorying in these—be it a church—be it a nation—be it a family—be it an individual, they will be sure to find themselves soon abased. Man is not to be proud of his wisdom: but we generally find that the man who has least wisdom is the most proud of the little he possesses; as if, conscious of its emptiness, and feeling it would collapse, he hugs it the closer, and makes the most of it. Is it not too true, that many a man would rather be called a knave than be thought a fool? Power is another source of pride. Has not philosophy its Nebuchadnezzars as well as political power? Satan is very aptly described by Milton, as saying,

“Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven;”

and have we not met with many a one who had rather be the head of the village than a subject in the metropolis? Such is man's lust of power; and wherever such love of power is, there it will be brought down. Need I tell you that man is proud of wealth? Money is the idol of the nineteenth century. The banker's pen is more powerful now than the warrior's sword or the statesman's policy. It is not cabinets, but banks, that resolve the fixity and the downfall of kingdoms. It is the stroke of the banker's pen, not the blow of the general's sword, that determines who shall conquer. Camillus of old cast his sword into the scale when the

conflict was dubious : it is now the money-lender, who casts his money-bags into the scale, and determines which nation shall be great. All the difference between the mammon-worshipper of the present day and the golden image-worshipper of Nebuchadnezzar consists in this, that Nebuchadnezzar dug his gold from earth, melted and moulded it into a golden image, and caused the people, by the sound of music, to fall down and worship it ; and now man digs gold from the mine, stamps it into coins, and, by appealing to the lusts and affections of the human heart, making these the sweet music to entice, he causes men to fall down and worship. But whenever man thus puts wisdom, or wealth, or power, in the room of God, or, believing in God, is proud of the one or the other, he will learn—by the terrible penalty which, if he be an unconverted man, is purely penal, but if he be a Christian, by a blessed chastisement that is purely paternal,—that “them that walk in pride, God is able to abase.”

I might allude to other forms of pride that God can, and will, surely abase. The careless sinner, who thinks nothing of God, and cares nothing about his soul, walks in perilous pride upon the brink of an awful precipice. The self-righteous man, who thinks his own righteousness good enough for God, and Christ's righteousness too worthless to be accepted by him, walks in pride. The worldly-minded man, whose living is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life—walks in pride ; and God will abase him. Pride is not the monopoly of those that ride in chariots and wear crowns and coronets. Pride grows in a cellar as well as in a royal palace. It is an indigenous weed. It is not the composition of the idol that makes the idolatry, but it is the devotion that is given by the heart to that idol, whether it be wood, or brass, or stone. There may be pride where there is but a single sovereign, greater than where there are a thousand. There may be pride in the possession of a single acre, greater and more hateful to God, than in the possession of a thousand acres. And where it exists, we learn from our text, and from all

experience, none can bring it down but one. All the miracles of Moses failed to bring down the pride of Pharaoh: all the preaching down and denouncing of pride by the most eloquent preacher that ever spoke, will fail to abase the pride of a single individual in his audience. The wind may beat upon the icicle; the storm and the tempest may smite it; the earthquake may split it; the avalanche may descend, and send it thundering down into the valley below, but only the sunbeam can thaw and melt it. Nothing can subdue the pride of man's heart but God—God, in the rays of the Gospel. Experience will never do it. How true is it, that, often as we have found cistern upon cistern, that we have laboriously dug, to be empty, we look for other cisterns still! How is it, that often as we find flower after flower to fade and wither the instant that we touch it, yet we seek after other flowers still? How is it, that after joy on joy has been pursued, and has perished the instant that we grasped it, we yet still seek after joys that bloom not upon the tree of time, but only upon the tree that is in the midst of the paradise of God? It is because we do not like to be indebted to another. Man would like to save himself, justify himself, regenerate himself, glorify himself, and sing songs of praise throughout eternity “to me that loved myself, and washed myself, and redeemed myself, and glorified myself; unto me be glory and honour, and blessing and praise!” What is all the Gospel but just God humbling the heart? What is justification? God laying your glory in the dust, and placing the greatest philanthropist and the greatest criminal on the same dead level of sin and condemnation; that when they have learned where sin has laid them, they may be clothed with and exalted by the righteousness of Christ, and glory in His name all the day long, and realise this blessed experience, that when we begin to exalt God, God will begin to exalt us. What is regeneration, but God's Holy Spirit revealing to man what is in his own real nature, and that his flowers are weeds, his gold is dim—nay, worse than dim, worthless; that his sins are his own, and they should humble

him; that his graces are not his own, and they should humble him also; and that he can no more change his own heart than he can, by any concentration of his physical powers, or combined action of his muscles, lift himself from the earth a single foot? When God has thus humbled man, and convinced him that he has no holiness and no grace of himself, then he will exalt him. The man whose heart has been renewed only by baptism, will raise the priest; but the man whose heart has been renewed and regenerated by the Spirit of God will magnify and praise the Lord alone, and from the first bud to the next blossom, and the last fruit of a holy life, he will give all the glory unto God.

Do I speak to any here that are proud? This passion is in us all: it is human nature; it is the secret of many of our miscarryings: it is the cause of most of our failures. You say, you do not like to be humble: nobody does like to be humble. Man does not like to be humbled before a brother, but he likes much less to be humbled before himself; the instinctive pride that is in him rebelling against the humility that sweeps his foundation of self-sufficiency from beneath him. But if this pride be not abased in mercy, it will be abased in judgment. Think of the goodness, the mercy, the forgiveness of God, that, so thinking, you may be humble. Think of what human nature is; that the greatest criminal who commits the most enormous crime, and perishes on the scaffold on account of it, is an *alter ego*, another self, actuated by the same passions, only in their full burst, flow, and development; and that, except for the grace of God, that criminal might have been myself. Think of this, that you may be humble before God. But if you wish to be humbled in the very dust, read those thrilling words, "God so loved me, that he gave his only-begotten Son to die for me!" See what my redemption cost! See what a penalty my sin demanded! See what my ruin is, by the height from which the Saviour came, and the depth to which the Saviour sank! and when you have looked at that cross, and listened to that suffering cry, and beheld that completed sacrifice, and that

unbounded love, oh ! then, such grace—such love—such mercy, will expel pride from the stubborn heart of man; and it will do what judgment, what affliction, what preaching, what experience has failed to do—it will cause you to abase yourself in the sight of the Lord, that he may lift you up, and so you may be exalted in due time.

Pray for that Holy Spirit which alone can melt the proud heart; and when it has changed and regenerated that heart, then, in lowliness upon earth, you will bless him, and on a throne of glory in heaven, you will magnify him; and thank God throughout all eternity that you have learned in mercy, the truth which so many have learned in judgment—“Them that walk in pride, God is able to abase.”

LECTURE XI.

THE SCEPTRE OF GOD.

“Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.”—DANIEL iv. 26.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR “learned that the heavens do rule,” as we see in this acknowledgment made after he was restored to his mind. The prediction was that the tree, the symbol of his majesty, should be cut down; and he who was symbolised by that tree should be driven forth to herd with the beasts of the field, and there to suffer degradation and shame till he learned the lesson that he had forgotten, that “God reigns,” or, to use the language of the text, “that the heavens do rule.” And you will perceive that after he was restored he says, in verse 3, “How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders!” and then here is what he had learned: “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.” He learned the lesson, and he expressed it after he was restored to his mind, that it was not his sceptre that controlled the worlds, but the sceptre of him whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth from generation to generation. The proposition I should wish to illustrate is, that “God reigns,” “that the heavens do rule;” and in endeavouring to do so, I will look first at some of the difficulties that lie in the way of our acknowledgment of this fact. There is nothing that man is more prone to dispute than the living, ever present, ever active supremacy of God. There is an universal belief that God *was*, there is a very faint belief that God *is*:

there is an impression among some that God made the world, and then left the machinery to go on after he had wound it up; and that since he made it he has retired from the world, and left it to the dominion of what philosophers call second causes—what infidels call accidents.

Now then, let us look at some of the difficulties that lie in our way, and I will try as I am able very briefly to explain them.

First, how can we reconcile the entrance of sin with the existence, the supremacy, and the rule of God? If you ask men, Does God govern the world? they answer, "Yes." But how is it compatible with the government of a wise, a merciful, an omnipotent God, that such an intruder, such a foul disturber of the harmony of the world as sin, should have been allowed to interpolate itself, and occasion apostasy, rebellion, and discord in his suffering, wide dominions? The entrance of sin is not the disclosure of revelation, but the disclosure of history, of experience, and of fact. It is not the Christian alone who is called upon to explain why sin is come into the world, but the sceptic himself. He admits the existence and the reign of a God: he must admit the fact of the presence, and the disturbing power of sin. If there be a difficulty, it is a difficulty also at the door of the sceptic, as broad and as palpable as that which lies at the door of the Bible Christian. But we may look at it in a light in which it may appear at least not to have been God's fault, if I may reverently use the expression, that sin has entered the world. He made man perfectly free and unfettered, with every bias to good, and with no bias to evil; with every inducement to retain his allegiance, with every possible dissuasive against the violation of that allegiance. He gave him genius to originate—a heart to love—a conscience, the realm of right and of wrong; and, of necessity, placed him under a law, because, if there be no law, there can be no lawgiver, there can be no subject; and, if no subject, of course no supreme governor. By the very nature of the creature's constitution, the

creature must be placed under law. Now when he placed Adam under law, God might by his omnipotence have prevented him from stretching forth his hand to touch the forbidden fruit. But it does not follow that because he *might* have prevented him, therefore he *ought* to have prevented him. It may be—nay, we are sure it must be—that more grand and magnificent results will yet be evolved from the wrecks of paradise than ever could have been reflected from it, if it had retained its glory undismantled and unshorn, even to the age in which we now live. And to show how fallacious is the argument, that because God could have prevented man, therefore he ought to have done so, I may observe, man has it in his power to destroy himself; he may throw himself over a precipice, or cast himself into the sea: God might, by the exercise of omnipotence, have rendered this impossible: but then the very impossibility of it would have reflected deeper discredit on the creature; for the creature would not have been a free and unshackled being, in which he glories as his dignity, but an automaton—a piece of machinery, moved by extraneous impulses, without a will to determine, a conscience to feel, or a judgment to reflect. Or, to use another illustration, if a man goes to put his hand into the fire, God tells that man, by the experience of others, and by the exercise of his reason, “If you put your hand into the fire you will burn it and suffer pain.” That is the plan he has adopted: he might have taken the plan you propose, and by the fiat of omnipotence have rendered it a physical impossibility for the man to burn his hand. But he has not done so: he has shown man that if he puts his hand in the fire it is sure to be burned; and man, knowing what the effect of the act will be, is thus deterred from the commission of it. Such was the case with Adam in paradise. God did not draw back his arm by a physical restraint from touching the forbidden fruit; but he told man, “If you touch that fruit you bring death into the world and all your woe; it rests with you, as a free and responsible being, to touch it and perish, or to abstain and live for

ever." Do we not then thus "vindicate the ways of God to man," and show that by *permitting* sin, not *sending* it, he treated man as a rational and responsible being, and that man could not have been placed, as far as we can see, in circumstances more favourable to obedience, compatibly with the dignity of his own nature, or in circumstances more calculated to set forth the wisdom, the beneficence, the love, the holiness, and the justice of him who rules in the heavens, and constituted man once his vicegerent upon earth?

Another difficulty in recognising the truth contained in my text, that God lives and reigns, consists in the fact that the present generation is often found to suffer for the sins of the past, and that the children of to-day inherit the consequences of the sins of their fathers of yesterday, and of former generations. If this be very difficult to reconcile with the fact that God reigns, let it be remembered it is not a text in the Bible only, but it is a fact in the history of mankind; it is not asserted in the Bible only that it shall be so, but it is proved to our senses, and is legible in the chronicles of every land, that it actually is so. And therefore, if it be difficult to reconcile it with the truth, that God reigns, it is a difficulty that the sceptic must feel just as strongly as the Christian; but the Christian alone will try to show that possibly there are in this fact—that children suffer for the father's sins—lessons of the greatest possible goodness and practical value. May it not be to teach us that we have an interest in all that are around us, and that the well-being of our child should be as precious to us as our own? that man is to work not for himself only, but for others? that if a man sin, the rebound of his sin will be felt, not only in himself, but in his children and his children's children to the third and fourth generations? This great fact is fitted to make men feel, by reasons the most pressing and the most powerful, that it is their interest, and the interest of their offspring, that they should live soberly, righteously, and godly. And what seems to be a hardship is really a mercy, fitted to arouse all man's feelings

against sin, and to lead him by the deepest instincts of his nature to guard against that which will not only ruin himself, but transmit suffering, and pain, and tribulation to the third and fourth generation of his descendants.

Another fact that occurs in the government of God, very difficult at first sight to reconcile with the fact of that government, is the strange procedure which sends one sinner to punish another, and one wrong-doer to avenge the misconduct and the crimes of another. For instance, Napoleon was employed or commissioned to punish the sins of profligate Europe; and at an earlier epoch Cyrus, to execute judgment upon Babylon; and, at a period later than the last, Titus and Vespasian and the Roman sword, to punish the disobedience and the gross transgressions of his people Israel. It is asked, How can you reconcile this with the fact that God reigns, when he might himself punish by the direct interposition of his hand? Does it not seem incompatible with our conceptions of his holiness, that he should employ men so profligate to execute his purposes, which are in themselves so pure? That he does so is not a declaration of Scripture only, but it is a chapter in the history of every nation upon earth: God says himself, "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger; I will send him against an hypocritical nation, against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil and to take the prey, and to tread them down as the mire in the streets." May it not be to teach men this yet more effectually than if God had interposed by a direct manifestation of his own right hand, that when sinners have ceased to rely upon God it is folly to rely upon one another? May it not be to teach mankind that no conspiracy of wicked men, however great, and however secretly concocted, is without an element of internal destruction, disorganisation, and decay? If all men in the world could form a conspiracy that would last, it would be a very formidable thing; but history shows us that if bad men combine, there are elements of disorganisation and ruin in the

combination, so real and so active, that before many years have swept over the conspiracy, one will rise up against the other, and that which was designed to dethrone the Almighty will end in the destruction of those that concocted it.

A very difficult thing to reconcile with the doctrine that God reigns, is the fact that infants die. But this fact is not only declared in the Bible, but it is proved in every page of the chronicles of every family as well as of every land. Infants do die though free from actual transgression; this is matter of fact; and there may be in that occurrence not what is inconsistent with the reign of God, but what is eminently calculated to make that reign more palpable to man's mind. The babes die to teach us that original sin is an actual thing, and to show that some terrible disaster has fallen upon all mankind, which blights the flower that has just budded and bloomed to-day, as well as the grey-haired sire, on whose head the snows of threescore years and ten have fallen. And if it be true that all babes who die in infancy are without exception saved, as true I believe it to be, then it is not cruelty to the babes,—it is making it a missionary to the parents, and teaching a lesson which man would deny if only actual sinners were cut off, and babes who have never sinned were universally spared.

We see every day the fact, that parents are taken from their children in the midst of their lives, and their offspring cast dependent on the wide world. This appears to us a cruel thing, and we wonder how it is possible to reconcile it with the Providential government of God. Yet there may be lessons latent in it which we do not see; it may be to teach the parents to work while it is called to-day, and discharge to their offspring the duties that they owe, not knowing how long the opportunity may be given them; and thus to make parental instruction more earnest, and parental duties more faithfully discharged, because there is ever present a deep sense of the possibility of the severance of ties so beautiful and livine, and the loss of the opportunity of giving those

instructions, which shall be the happiness of the child upon earth, and its yet greater and richer happiness in glory.

Another difficulty in receiving the truth that God reigns, is the fact that vice and dishonesty are sometimes prosperous and triumphant, while piety and goodness are sometimes depressed. It is so; the Bible says that it will be so; but it also explains the reason why. This is not the dispensation of absolute justice. In hell the wicked universally suffer; in heaven the holy are universally happy. In this world the two parties are mingled, and we see sometimes bad men prosper and sometimes good men suffer. But if all good men prospered upon earth, then men would profess religion for the sake of its temporal benefits; if good men, on the other hand, always suffered upon earth, men might be deterred from joining the ranks of Christianity, because it would be joining the ranks of martyrs. But, under the Providence of God, good men sometimes suffer and sometimes prosper, and we are thus taught to cleave to the Gospel because it is the mind of God, and to accept duty because it is duty, and not on account of the temporal rewards to which it may conduct us, or the temporal penalties from which it may possibly save us. The tares and the wheat grow in the same field; it is right that they should thus grow together till the harvest, and whenever the effort is made to separate them now, it ends in the injury of the wheat, and not the rooting up permanently of the tares.

Another great difficulty which occurs in receiving the great truth that the heavens do rule, is the lengthened lives of many bad men, and the short lives and premature deaths of really good and devoted men. For instance, Voltaire lived to upwards of eighty; Paine to a considerable age; Napoleon passed the meridian of life: if Voltaire, Paine, and Napoleon had perished in their cradles, how much mischief would the world have escaped! how much injury and suffering would mankind have been spared! and, on the other hand, we argue, if such men as Cecil, and Howell, and Newton, and Edward Bickersteth, and Chalmers had been spared to

eighty, ninety, or one hundred years of age, what blessings would the world have reaped thereby! So we naturally infer; but if we could lift the curtain and see the reasons that are behind it, we should find that there were good reasons why Voltaire should be spared to eighty, and Bickersteth should be cut off at sixty; and reasons, perhaps, that are more connected with the real well-being of man, and with the glory of God, than we are at first disposed to believe. One lesson taught us by the fact that good men perish early is, that we must be more active; their mantles are bequeathed to us—the places they have vacated are for us to fill; and it becomes us, therefore, ever as the good and the great fall like fruits that are ripe from the tree of life, to take their place and enter upon their duties, and try, however feebly, by the grace of that God who gives his strength to the weak and his grace to all that ask it, to supply to mankind the great loss they have sustained by the departure of men so good, so beneficent, and so useful. Besides, when we look at these things, we are apt to think only of this world; but when God called Bickersteth to himself, and said to him, “Come up hither,” it was because Bickersteth’s work in this world was finished, and God had work for him to do in a higher, a better, and a nobler world, whence he shall no more be removed. We look at matters selfishly when we think of this world only, and forget that there are other worlds where there may be sublime missions to be discharged still; and that those men have not ceased to labour, but have only laid aside the robe of the Levite who ministers outside the vail, to put on the sacred vestments of the priest, to minister before the altar and in the Holy of Holies for ever and ever.

There is another thought too that occurs to us as a difficulty in recognising the government of God—the afflictions of the people of God. Why do we see them suffer? why do we see them bereaved, deprived of their property, afflicted with disease, laid aside? Why is this? There are good reasons for it; and some of these the Bible gives us. “It is good for me,” says one, “that I

was afflicted :” another says, “ Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory.” Human nature, like the sons of Zebedee, would like to sit on the right hand and on the left hand of the Saviour, but we do not want to drink of the Saviour’s cup. Yet he fixes the dispensation that suits us ; and God, who superintends the action of the dispensation, will take care that our afflictions shall not be too great, nor too many, nor too heavy, nor too long, as Satan would like them ; nor too light, nor too few, nor too short, as we should like them ; but that they shall be just what is most expedient for us, conducive to our good, and illustrative of his glory.

It is thus that I have pointed out some of the difficulties that lie in the way of our accepting the truth contained in the text, that “ the heavens do rule.” And I have tried to show, or rather to suggest, that there may be good reasons, though we cannot see them all, why all that man supposes to be irreconcilable with the sceptre and supremacy of God, may not only be reconcilable with it, but may be also calculated to cast greater glory upon his name, and to diffuse more extensive blessings among all the children of God scattered throughout the world. Let us then, in looking at the fact that “ God rules,” remember that he has designs of ultimate good to us and of ultimate glory to himself, which it may be most important for us to see worked out in the world. For instance, God suffers sin to develop itself upon earth into crimes and horrible calamities. He may be doing so, not because he hates us, for that he does not, nor because he would punish the guilty criminal—that will be a very minor reason—but because this earth on which we live is the great lesson-book of the universe ; and it may be that the inhabitants of sister orbs and of sister stars may be grouped in gazing clusters around this distant spot in the universe, and may be looking down and seeing, beyond the reach of its contagion, what terrible issues are treasured up in that terrible thing sin, and what it would do if all the restrictions were withdrawn, and it were left to create on earth and

to work out that hell, which it has wrought out in some sequestered place in the world, where the worm never dies, and the fire is not quenched.

It may be we are apt to form conclusions that certain things are irreconcilable with the government of God, from our only seeing a portion of their action. If you see only the foundation of a house, you ought not thence to judge what will be the splendour of its superstructure: if you read the title-page of a book, you ought not, as many do, to say, the book is a false book, or a bad book, because you have only read the title-page: and if you see but some of the outside and less significant machinery of Providence, and cannot see the inner machinery which is with himself, the spring, and the issue, it is not right to judge of what things are, by the partial and defective view that we are able to obtain of them. Take, for instance, the history of Joseph; when you saw Joseph cast into the pit, sold to the merchants, accused of an offence by the wife of Potiphar, thrown into a dungeon; one would have said, if you had stopped there and seen no further, "What an unfortunate lad is that! excellent in his character, he seems to be the most unfortunate in life." But if you could have lived to see him at the right hand of Pharaoh—if you could have lived to see him save his nation from destruction, and ultimately triumph over all his trials,—you would have said, How wonderful in working is that God who overrules the passions of man, restrains his wrath, and makes the remainder of it to praise him! and how rashly do we often judge!

Again, when we reflect on such scenes as the French Revolution of 1782, to take the most dreadful one, you cannot understand how it could be that, if there be a God that ruleth in heaven, men should have been so left to themselves by that God, and within his dominions, as to perpetrate the crimes which can barely be mentioned, and the murders and atrocities which the historian is scarcely able to enumerate. But now that we have seen what it was, and have learned what lessons were to be deduced from it, we can show that it was first to punish

the profligacy of an eminently profligate people; and, secondly, it was to prove what a people can do and will do, that has cast off God; and it was next to teach us that the experiment has been tried, and in every case has turned out not merely a failure, but absolute destruction to them that made it, that the world cannot be carried on without religion; and that society cannot cohere without God; in the words of Robespierre, the sanguinary despot of that terrible era, "If there be not a God, we must make one, in order to make society hold together." The atheist in his blasphemy proclaimed God almost as distinctly as the Christian who says, "God reigns, and the heavens do rule."

In the next place, we have to learn too, in looking at all these difficulties, that God, in dealing with mankind, and in ruling over them, does not contemplate in his dealings one generation, but successive generations. We see one whole generation suffer, and we think it incompatible with the goodness of God: but if we look to the next generation we shall discover that the sufferings of the first were preparing the soil for seeds to be cast into it, which were designed to grow up and ripen into precious harvests of happiness and peace to future ones. In order therefore to judge of God's designs, and of the wisdom and goodness of his government, you must look, not at one particular generation, but at all the generations of mankind, and be content to discover that your sufferings in the present may grow up and burst into blessings lasting as the stars, for generations that are yet to follow you.

And in the next place, we must view all that God does in this world in connexion with another world. Recollect that this world is but the pilgrimage through which we are passing, and the next world is the home to which we are going; and what seems irreconcilable with God's government, when beheld in the light of this world, may be seen to be not only reconcilable with it, but richly illustrating its beneficence and wisdom, when viewed in the light of that future world for which God is preparing his people, and toward which they are jour-

neying as strangers and pilgrims through this present world. This world is but a nook—a little tiny nook—in the vast domains over which God's sceptre stretches. If it were possible to conceive of a fly being endowed with the faculty of reason for a moment—and if that fly were crawling about the cornice of one of the pillars of St. Peter's cathedral, it might perhaps say, "What a paltry contemptible place this is! these cornices seem to be doing no good; what is the use of them? what a mean little place it is, and how unworthy of the architect who planned it?" We should say, if we heard its reasoning, it was the smallness of the insect, and the limited nature of the horizon of its vision, which made it think what it saw to be so small and insignificant, and its not understanding that the cornice of the pillar could no more be dispensed with than the dome or the roof of the cathedral, being part and parcel of one great design, and in harmony with all that was about it. We are just like that fly in this respect, perched upon some little pinnacle in some little nook of this little world, where we venture to pronounce upon the whole from our very limited experience of a part, forgetting that our ignorance should make us humble, and our knowledge that God reigns should make us trust that all will be wisely, beneficently, and graciously arranged.

I have thus then looked at some of the objections to this truth; let me now notice some positive facts tending to prove that the heavens do rule; and that while God does thus rule, there is every reason to believe, both from Scripture and experience, that his rule is wise, and good, and merciful, and gracious.

In the first place, God is infinitely wise: we are quite certain, therefore, that what he does must be the result of infinite wisdom. Admit the fact that God reigns in the atom as well as in the fixed star—that God moves with the current of the tiny stream as much as he rides upon the whirlwind and sails upon the waves of the desert sea: admit that God is in all the windings of individual private life, as well as in the cataracts and floods and storms of public and of social life—and then,

recollect that the God who thus controls all, is infinitely wise, and you may be satisfied that there is no risk of a blunder, there is no possibility of a mistake, there is nothing done by God that will need to be undone, that in short there is no dispensation, from Adam to the present hour, that is not associated with and superintended by a wisdom that cannot err.

Recollect, in the next place, that God is infinitely good. That goodness is dimly shadowed forth in nature; it is clearly expressed in the Gospel—"God so loved the world, that he *gave* his only-begotten Son." The gift of Christ is the measure of God's goodness. Let us pause at that text: it is not said, "God so loved the world, that he *permitted* his Son to come and die for the world:" that would have been great love; but "God so loved the world, that he *gave* his Son." Christ is the *donative* of God, the expression and the measure of God's infinite love; the truth is, not that "God loves us because Christ died for us;" but it is "that God so loved us *that* Christ died for us:" Christ is not the *cause* of God's love to us, but he is the *expression* of God's love to us. And this is a beautiful thought which seems to me so precious, that the death of my Saviour is not only a channel through which God's love can reach me consistently with his justice; but it is also evidence to me, that God loved me from everlasting, and will love me to the end; and it is the proof to me that when I am admitted into heaven, I shall not be admitted there simply as the convict who has been pardoned, and to be treated and tolerated in heaven as such, but it is the evidence to me that I shall be welcomed into heaven as the reconciled and accepted son, amid the hosannas and acclamations of angels and of archangels, and that I shall be there as a son in the presence of a father, not as a forgiven criminal in the presence of a judge who barely tolerates him there. "God so loved us that he *gave* his Son." If this be so, then, not only is there infinite wisdom, but there is infinite love; and therefore the nature of God's government in the world is not only so wise as to prevent all possibility of mistake or error, but it is so good that it precludes

the interposition of ill-will, revenge, or enmity, of any sort or of any degree.

In the next place, God, who governs the world, is "omnipotent." We may therefore be sure, that whatever his wisdom devises, or his love inspires, his power will execute. We are sure, therefore, that what the Psalmist says, when he thus describes the power of God, is borne out by history:—"O Lord of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." He is, in the language of the Apostle, "able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

And, in the last place, the God who rules the world in wisdom and in love, and with omnipotent power, is described to be an unchangeable God. If God were a changeable being, we could have no confidence in his government at all; if God were a changeable God, who would retract to-day what he said yesterday, the Bible would be the most worthless of all the books upon earth, because how could I know that he would adhere to the promises he has made, or how could I know that the truth he had stated he will not reverse? And therefore the immutability of God is the crowning point; for his wisdom, his love, his power, his faithfulness, his truth, are fixed as the heavens, and immutable for ever. And so it is in creation. The very facts that men quote as the evidences that God does not reign, are just the very facts that I would quote as the evidence that God does reign. For instance,—the fact is, that water shall run down hill: men say, that is the law of water, and therefore it can do so without God. It is the fact, for instance, that fire burns; and they say that is the combination of the oxygen of the atmosphere with carbon, whereby flame is produced; that is the law; and therefore we need not admit a God to explain the phenomenon. The continuity of the fact may give it the name of a

law, but it does not the less prove it is the action of Deity. If these things were not always so, we could have no confidence in creation. What man would build a ship to carry his goods to the ends of the world across the desert sea, if that sea were accidentally sometimes liquid and sometimes solid? What man could have any confidence in the safety of his house, or in the security of his person, if the fire sometimes burned and sometimes did not, or sometimes spread its flames a hundred feet and sometimes only a few inches? The very fixity of the laws of nature is evidence not of God's retreat from his world, but of the immutability of the God that made them, and one of the grounds of my confidence in his governments; and of my firm conviction that the heavens do rule, precious in this world, and infinitely comforting in the prospect of that which is to come.

God reigns; and the evidence of it is this,—that he is showing year after year, and age after age, that all the wiles of Satan, and all the power of men, cannot permanently build up a falsehood, and that all the combinations of them both together cannot uproot the truth that he has given to us. Is there no evidence of the present action and government of God in this fact, that every false religion is proved by history to be a blunder, and that every atom of divine truth is proved by experience to be immortal and permanent. Is it not evidence that the heavens do rule, when we see all men, of all pursuits, in all acts, and under all circumstances, consciously or unconsciously, designedly, or undesignedly, contributing to the spread and adding to the splendour of the claims and glory of the Christian faith? Is it no evidence that the heavens do rule, when we see proofs of the truth of the Bible dug from the lava of Herculaneum and Pompeii, excavated from the grave of Nineveh by Layard, brought forth by Young and Champollion from the mummies hidden thousands of years in the pyramids? Is there not evidence that there is a God watching over that blessed book called the Bible, and guarding that divine treasure called the Gospel, in the fact that he is bringing forth

elucidations of its truth and proofs of its authority from the grave of Nineveh—the pyramids of the Pharaohs—the crash of cities—the wreck of nations—till at last the most sceptic minds are constrained to own that the religion of the despised Nazarene is the religion of the great God, and to predict that it will last, and flourish, and reign for ever and ever? Is it no evidence that God reigns, or that the heavens do rule, when we see all things working together for good to the people of God; and their light affliction, which is but for a moment, issuing in their eternal glory; and all the facts of history, and all the phenomena of science, and all the phases of national experience, helping, and in no respect retarding or obstructing, the cause of Christ? Is it not an evidence that God reigns, when we see the Church and the University flourish together—religion and science, like sisters, walk arm-in-arm, the one casting its glory upon the other, and both arrayed in priestly robes, witnessing to him who gave them their commission, and ministering to the wants and necessities of mankind? And is not all this tending to accelerate the advent of that blessed day when science shall come forth from her cells, and students from their colleges, and philosophers from their studies, and historians from their labours, and all men from all places in the world, and all things in their maturity and ripeness, to combine with one heart and with one mind, and with one mouth, in saying, “The heavens do rule,” and “Jesus is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world?”

LECTURE XII.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

DANIEL V.

BEING unable to select a verse on which to construct an epitome of this sublime and interesting chapter, I have taken as the subject of comment the whole chapter. The main facts in it, as far as these relate to Nebuchadnezzar the grandfather, and Belshazzar the king his grandson, we have considered in the successive expositions of various passages in the preceding chapters: we have now the account of Belshazzar's reign, his sensual life, the departure of his kingdom, his own slaughter in the midst of his revels, the victorious army of the Medes in the midst of Babylon, and the first or the golden empire passed over to the second or the silver one.

There was no sin in the feast over which Belshazzar presided. I mean, it was not necessarily sinful. It was an annual festival, commemorative of a great event. The sin was not in the eating, or in the drinking, if both were in moderation, but in the spirit which actuated the eaters and the drinkers, and the excess to which they went in both, and the defiance they showed toward God.

It was during this festival that Babylon was taken. The Mede knew beforehand its date, its nature, and its accomplishments, marched his troops into the midst of Babylon, took possession of its palaces, its halls, and all its glory, and instituted that second empire, the history of which we have briefly sketched in a previous discourse. It is well known that the siege of Babylon had already lasted two years and a half; all the besieger's stratagems

had failed, and he was on the point of retiring from Babylon as a city impregnable, and fitted by its great strength to defy all human aggressive power; but on this night, one day's Bacchanalian excess did for Babylon what all the siege and stratagems of two years under the Mede had been utterly unable to accomplish. And it seems from this, as from kindred instances in the history of nations, that when God has pronounced the hour of a nation's doom, the inhabitants of that nation seem to lose the caution, the skill, the energy they had exhibited before, and precipitate the very result they themselves are anxious to avert. Nations rarely fall before a foreign aggressor; their ruin or their glory is, under God, within themselves. Nations die suicides; they are seldom or never destroyed by any force from without. Let a nation be true to God, loyal to its laws—let purity and piety and true religion irradiate its palaces, and cast their softening influence over all its lanes, its alleys, and its hovels, and that nation has within it the grounds, as it has over it the promises, of immortality. But let a nation be corrupt in its lower classes, profligate and sensual in its higher classes—let there be education without religion—let there be profession without principle—let there be a name and a form without the substance, and it needs no prophet to predict that nation's doom, and no long or deep calculation to count the years that are sure to precede it.

The great sin which seemed to characterise the feast celebrated on this occasion was, Belshazzar's impious mockery in taking the sacred vessels which his father, as he is here called, or, strictly, and as it might be rendered, his grandfather, had carried from Jerusalem and brought into the midst of Babylon, and in making use of those vessels for the loose and licentious purposes of an impious festival, as if he could hurl defiance at the God of Abraham, and despise and defy the power of him by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. There was in this act needless insult to the captive Jews, and impious blasphemy against the God whom they worshipped. If the vessels were taken by superior power,

and in just judgment for the sins of the people, it became him in the presence of that people to lay them aside and shut them up from their reach, but not to insult them by profaning them. We have no warrant to insult the humblest rite of another's faith. Let it be Hindooism, let it be Mahommedanism, which we come into contact with; convince, convert, enlighten, explain, but never think that you can put down a sentiment that is sacred by mere ridicule, or that you can exalt a dogma that is divine by a needless reproaching of the creed and rites of the victims of a superstitious faith. No misfortune is so great as to have become the worshipper of a false God; no man is so deeply to be pitied as he that has lost his way to heaven: to insult him is inhuman; to turn his rites into ridicule is unchristian; to try to enlighten, convince, and bring him into the more excellent way, is at once worthy of our highest efforts and our greatest sacrifices, most likely to succeed because owned, and blessed, and recognised by him without whose blessing nothing can prosper, nothing is wise, nothing is holy, and whose blessing nothing sinful ever inherits.

The sin then, I have shown, was the desecration of that which was holy, or the application to profane and licentious purposes of the vessels that were outwardly dedicated to the God of Israel. Is it possible that we, "on whom the ends of the world are come," can in any respect be guilty of a similar offence? It is possible, and in many ways. Where religion is dragged from its lofty and controlling sphere, and made to gild the claims of a party or to enforce the peculiar principles and power of a sect, it is a holy thing desecrated to an unholy purpose. When the sacrament is taken, not to commemorate the death of Christ, but to obtain a passport to an office and a qualification for a political or civil sphere, we see a sacred vessel desecrated to an unholy end. When the facts and the expressions of the Bible, its sublime, its pure, and its holy truths, are used, as they not unfrequently are, to point a pun, add edge to a jest, or keenness to a sarcasm, to excite a laugh or to provoke a sneer, you have God's vessels desecrated to unhallowed

and profane ends. Never try to construct jests from the Bible. The jest that is based upon a text of Scripture will come across you like a dark horrid spectre when the most solemn appeals are made from the pulpit and the most holy lessons are being read from the Bible. I know not a more reckless act, or a more offensive sin, than that of taking divine truths and making puns on them, or using them as *double-entendres*, or for other purposes of a like nature. Such deeds reflect little credit on the piety, and still less, let me add, on the good taste of those that so use them.

I think we desecrate holy things when the sublime descriptions of the judgment to come are turned into a mere musical festival. No one more admires sacred music than I do. No one is more deeply impressed and thrilled by its magnificent and glorious conceptions. But, when the awful agonies of Calvary, the deep and sorrowful experience of the suffering Son of man, are used merely to create the most delightful emotions, or the semi-sensuous, semi-spiritual feelings of the crowd that listen, I do think it is the nearest approach to Belshazzar's feast, when the sacred things of God are made to subserve to the sensuous tastes of man. I do not mean that there is to be no patronage of good music. I do not say that an oratorio is in itself inherently and inseparably sinful; but I do say the music should be used to impress the sentiment, not the sentiment to make the music only the more grateful. We are not to use God's truth to improve our music, but we are to use our noblest music to unfold the attributes and make more vivid and glorious the grandeur and the excellency of God's truth. And when the opposite course is adopted, and man takes holy and thrilling truths, the agonies of the cross, the triumphs of Tabor, the prospects of glory, the apocalyptic visions, and uses them for an unthinking crowd to shout *EXCORE!* and demand a repetition, and to applaud as a splendid exhibition or a glorious treat that they have listened to; then I think it is all but a repetition of Belshazzar's festival. I should like to hear those noble productions of Handel as acts of solemn

worship. And when I do hear them I feel for myself that it is the unfolding and developing of the deepest and holiest emotions of my heart. But when men who have no sympathy with God or with religion—no love to the Saviour or to his word, but merely a strong and enthusiastic sympathy with the grand and touching in musical creations, go to such festivals and use sacred words merely to help them to feel sublime emotions and praise the musician while pleased themselves, I do think that there is in such circumstances a profanation of that which is holy, and a desecration of that which is consecrated to God.

There seems to me to be a desecration of the holy vessels when the Sabbath is used for purposes of trade—when transactions of a political nature are carried on upon it—when the assembly, or the cabinet, or the congress, or the parliament, or chambers, or whatever these legislative bodies may be called, venture to meet on it. The Sabbath is the most sacred thing, next to the Bible, if not equal to the Bible, that God has given us. The desecration of a holy thing to a profane and an unholy purpose, occurs when the place appointed for the worship of God—for whether it be church or chapel, whether consecrated by a form or opened by a prayer, is to my mind of no great moment, for it is, in the one case or in the other, a place in which holy hearts are to beat, humble spirits are to bow, reverential prayer and praise are to be uttered—is employed for vestry meetings, for political disputes, for noisy and tumultuous assemblages, for shouting applause with the tongue, and beating applause with the feet. In this there seems to me to be an approximation to the profanation exemplified at the feast of Belshazzar, where sacred things were desecrated to unholy purposes. Let us then recollect that it is possible to be guilty of Belshazzar's sin in other than in Belshazzar's circumstances. Still more are we guilty of desecration when the heart that was made for God is made the throne of Mammon—when the affections that were destined to cluster around him are made to cling to that which is earthly—when God is superseded by the

world, and things divine by things that are human; then that which was once the image of God, and is meant to be restored and be so again, is desecrated to unhallowed purposes, God is dishonoured, and we are thereby ruined.

But I pass from the feast itself to notice the circumstances by which it was specially accompanied. It was a feast plainly of no ordinary splendour. All the lustre that rank and beauty and renown could shed upon it was there. There were toasts, I doubt not, of enthusiastic patriotism—there were songs of boundless loyalty—there was the loud defiance of every foe without, and there was the expressed and reiterated security against all disloyalty or treachery from within. But it was just when the feast had reached its highest splendour, and when all hearts were bounding and all spirits were joyous, that a thrill of terror rushed through every soul—that the cup fell from the king's hand—and, in the language of the Spirit of God, “his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him; the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote the one against the other.” A mysterious writing appeared upon the plaster: no eye seemed to guide it, no visible hand seemed to inscribe it, and mysterious fingers, belonging none knew to whom, recorded with the speed and with the vivid impression of the lightning, the unintelligible, but to this ungodly prince, because unintelligible, the awful inscription, “Mene, mene, tekem, upharsin.” One may ask, as the king and his lords did not understand it, why were they thus afraid? To a man who lives in sin, the unknown is always the terrible. Why? Because we always interpret the events that we cannot understand in the light of our own consciences, which we cannot but feel. The man that is at peace with God sees all events approaching him as a joyous procession of friends and benefactors, and helpers to immortality. The man who is not at peace with God, but who lives in sin, reads all events in the light of his conscience, and amid the fore-thrown terrors of a judgment-day to which that conscience points. Suspicion, fear, alarm, are in such

circumstances always the first feelings of the guilty. It is when unknown, mysterious, and supernatural things occur, that the conscience recollects a thousand crimes, accuses of many wrongs, and reasons of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. What an instance have we of this in the case of Adam and Eve! Before they sinned they loved to hear the footsteps of their approaching Father, as sounds that were far more musical to their ears than songs in the groves of Paradise. But the instant that they sinned, all was changed! they ran from God. Why? God merely said, "Adam, where art thou?"—the words that he had uttered often before: but on this occasion, the instant they heard them, Adam and Eve ran and hid themselves. Why this change? Because before the fall, their innocent hearts had construed the footsteps of God as footsteps significant of nearing beneficence and love; but after they had sinned, their unholy hearts construed God's footsteps in the light of their sins, and they felt or feared, because they were guilty, that it was an avenger coming to destroy them. In the case of Felix, we are told that when Paul reasoned before him he trembled. Take the case of Herod, when he heard of the progress of Jesus he was alarmed. What had Herod done? He had beheaded John the Baptist, a preacher whom Herod for a time "heard gladly;" who was to Herod and to Herod's court the most popular preacher that ever ascended a pulpit, until he touched on the sin that Herod loved, and pointed out the offence that necessitated either Herod's reformation or his fall. He took the alternative suggested to him by the infamous courtiers that were about him, and murdered the preacher in order that he might silence the preacher's testimony. Hence, when news were brought to Herod that Jesus was come, and that great miracles were wrought by him, Herod said, "This is John the Baptist, that is risen from the dead." See here the force of Herod's conscience: he was a Sadducee, who did not believe in the doctrine of the resurrection; yet so strong was his conscience, that it overpowered his convictions, and suggested to him that John was indeed risen from the dead, from

which he once thought that no one could arise, and had come to punish him for the crimes of which he had been guilty. Take the case of any of those mentioned in the word of God in similar circumstances, and you will call to mind what the poet has expressed in different words :—

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.”

But Belshazzar, who was so awed by this vision, was one who had had great opportunities of knowing and of doing the will of God. He had seen his grandfather banished from the society of men, and made the companion of the herds of the field and the fact which ought to have been a lesson to him he disregarded as if it had never occurred, and indulged in the sins and committed the crimes which had brought down such signal judgments upon Nebuchadnezzar. What he was condemned for by Daniel was not that he himself was wrong, but that he had not availed himself of the opportunities he had of being right. Our condemnation at the judgment-day will not be, that conscientiously we have believed a lie; but it will be, that we neglected the opportunities of acquiring and making ourselves acquainted with the truth. I do not believe that the Deist will be condemned for his Deism, but for his neglect of the means of making himself a Christian. I do not believe that the creed we have come to most conscientiously, as many a sceptic does, will be the great damning fact at the judgment-day, but that we devoted more time to the examination of a pebble, more attention to the study of a butterfly, more of genius to the enriching of ourselves and the filling of our coffers, than we ever spared for the solution of this great question, What must I do to be saved? or for solemn preparation for death and judgment and eternity, which the Bible suggests and implies in every page. It may be that the very Sabbath which you resolved to spend in dissipation at home might have been that on which you would have heard the truth which would have turned you from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. It may be that the very sermon which you neglected or excused yourself

for neglecting by a head-ache which would never have kept you from the Exchange, or from the appointed hour and place of business, might have been the very sermon which, under the blessing of the Spirit of God, would have proved to you a savour of life unto life. Never lose an opportunity of hearing the truth if you can possibly avoid it. There are proper excuses, beyond all dispute, but they ought to be grave, weighty, and worthy of the subject, to justify you in once omitting to listen to that glorious Gospel, in the preaching of which some single word dropped in season may be to you the turning point of your everlasting acceptance before God.

When the king saw this mysterious hand-writing, he sent for the astrologers, and asked them to explain the meaning of the inscription on the wall. It has been a puzzling question to commentators why the wise men were unable to translate it. The words are plain, translatable Chaldee; and a Chaldean scholar of the present day, if called upon to read them when inscribed upon anything, would be able instantly to do so. There have been two or three reasons assigned for this inability on the part of the wise men. One is, that they were written in the ancient Hebrew characters, the knowledge of which they had lost, and not in the modern Hebrew character, which differs little or nothing from the Chaldean. The character in which the Old Testament is commonly written is not the ancient Hebrew character, and the square form of the letters now used is not the primitive form. It has therefore been supposed that the inscription was in their ancient characters, and that therefore the Chaldeans were unable to read it. The difference between the two forms may be as great as between our English letters and the German, or perhaps between the modern English letters and the ancient Saxon or old English character. Others think that the words were inscribed in some dark mysterious hieroglyphic, to the signification of which there was no key in the possession of the astrologers. Others, that it was the divine truth written by a divine hand, and that, like the Bible itself, it was intelligible only in the light in which it was

written—that it was unmeaning and unintelligible to the astrologers, and luminous only to him whom the Spirit of God had taught. These are the reasons which have been assigned, and any and all of them are sufficient to explain why the Chaldean astrologers were unable to interpret the writing. When they failed to do so, all was blank terror and alarm in the minds of the king and his courtiers; but in the crisis, when all seemed to be agitated and to have lost their self-possession, one woman appeared nobler than them all, and spoke with a calmness, a self-possession, and a dignity which kindled hope where all before was utter despair. This woman—here called the queen—was not the wife of Belshazzar, but the wife of his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar; and therefore I venture to call her the queen dowager. She instantly stepped in and suggested the person who could solve the difficulty; and, in so doing, she presented a striking contrast to the conduct, feelings, and condition of those that were around her. It is almost invariably the fact, that woman, who is easily agitated by trifles, when some great crisis overtakes her which calls forth all the latent energies of her soul, is found to display a calmness, a magnanimity, a self-possession, that makes the magnanimity of the other sex sink into insignificance beside it! A woman is made for a great crisis; and it is in such that she shines like an angel, and indicates power which man does not give her credit for; and in this case, where those powers were illuminated, inspired, and sanctified by piety, she presented a contrast the most complete to all who were present at that dissipated festival, smitten as they were with fear, shuddering with alarm, and looking for the heavens to rend and the thunderbolts of God to overwhelm them. And is not the whole history of Christianity a comment on what I have said? Who was last at the cross? Woman. Who was first at the tomb on the resurrection morn? Woman. Amid all the voices of scorn, insult, and reproach that were lifted up against the blessed Jesus on the streets of Jerusalem, there is not one record of the voice of a woman being heard offering insult or using the language

of scorn or reproach. If she was first in the transgression, she was first in the scenes of the recovery and the resurrection also. It is time that man should not mention the first, but rejoice in her altered aspect and bearing in the last. And who does not know that the vigils of the dead, the beds of the sick, and the chambers of the dying, have never been without her presence? And who does not know that just where woman is placed in her proper position, there society culminates in its loftiest grandeur? teaching us that the ordinance of God is not that woman should be, as she is made in some countries, the slave and the serf of man, but the ornament, the companion, the friend, and in some respects the instructor of man.

The queen, thus exhibiting such magnanimity, appeared in the midst of the scene, and suggested Daniel as the solver of doubts, the explainer of perplexities, gifted by God with miraculous and inspired understanding. There is just one fact which I will now dwell upon, reserving for another lecture the inscription on the wall, and that is, that it is stated by the queen that Daniel was the head of the astrologers and the wise men and the magicians of the kingdom, "whom thy father made master of the astrologers, the wise men, the magicians, and the soothsayers." This has been objected to, because it is expressly stated in Deuteronomy that the children of Israel were to have no sympathy or communion with diviners and soothsayers; for instance, "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of the times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer." (Deut. xviii. 10.)

It has been asked, why did Daniel consent, according to the statement of the queen, to be the chief or the head of the astrologers, soothsayers, and magicians of the king of Babylon? The answer is, that our apprehension, *i.e.* the popular apprehension of the character of these astrologers is a very erroneous one. They were not enchanters who held communion with evil spirits; they were not

diviners. They were men who studied the signs and phenomena of astronomy, and, having no written revelations, they believed that God had written the present, the past, and also some presentiments of the future, in the sky; that the stars were the letters of that revelation; and that by studying them they might interpret events, present, past, and to come. If they had been soothsayers or diviners in the same sense as those to whom Moses alludes, for Daniel to have allowed himself to be placed at the head of them would have been the sacrifice of his principles and the surrender of his faith. This he did not and would not do. They were magi, not magicians. They were philosophers, not sorcerers. They held communion with God's outward world, not with evil spirits, as the sorcerers and diviners of old. When Daniel therefore consented to become their head, he became the patron of science, the principal of a university, the president of a royal society, and in no respect did he sympathise, by thus consenting, with sorcerers, magicians, or men that held communion with evil spirits. And no doubt more science than we generally give them credit for was known to these men. I doubt not that a perfect acquaintance with the stars of the sky, the flowers of the earth, all bright things above, and all beautiful things below, was more frequently the possession of these ancient philosophers, than modern ones, with their loftier discernment, are disposed generally to admit. Thus we may see that if we had no written book reflecting God's mind, the next book, though far inferior to it, is God's book of Nature: we can see his smiles in the sunbeams, his mercy in Providence, his glory in the expanse that is above us—his foot-print in the depths that are beneath us; and blind, blind indeed must that man be, who does not see that God is in the height, and in the depth, having a centre that is everywhere, and a circumference that is nowhere. These astrologers were not to be blamed if, without a Bible such as we have, they took the next Bible, the book of the outer world, and there sought to understand the mind, the purposes, and the will of God.

Daniel then, as the president of this royal society—a student of science—the principal of this learned university—is introduced into the feast amid its fading splendour, its departing joys, its miserable, degraded, and degrading remains; and the king speaks to him as recognising him only by name, but not knowing him in person. Daniel was banished from that court: he was too honest spoken a prophet to be very popular there. The king therefore tells him, “I have heard that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts—that the spirit of the Gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.” Daniel, without being discomposed by the cold reception of the monarch, and without being the least awed by the dangers he would have incurred through faithfulness, or in the least seduced by the honours and emoluments which would have fallen to his lot had he prophesied smooth things, addresses the monarch, seeing him disrobed of all the pomp and splendour of a throne, and only trembling like a guilty criminal in the presence of a holy and a heart-searching God. Daniel reminds him of his sins—tells him of his crimes—shows him how lessons he might have learned he had lost—how events that were significant he had neglected—how the history of his grandfather he had read backward—how he had incurred all the responsibilities of knowing the truth, and lost the benefit of all its precious and practical lessons; and then informs him that, because of these things, the kingdom had passed from him, and, in the high purposes of him who setteth up one and pulleth down others, had been given to another.

Lessons that are neglected become awful judgments. The sermons which you hear, which are fitted to instruct, but from which you draw no practical instruction whatever, shall reverberate in crashes of thunder at the Judgment Day; and you will learn, when it is too late, that it would have been more tolerable if you had never appeared within the walls of the sanctuary, or read the sacred page, or listened to a preached Gospel, than to have done all and despised all, and perished amid the

offers of love, the sounds of reconciliation, and the hopes of glory.

Turn to practical account every lesson that you hear : when the preacher has done, your duties only commence. What I speak is to instruct you, and that instruction is meant to save you. Go forth, and show on the Royal Exchange—in the cabinet, in the congress, in the parliament—show in all places that are high and in all that are lowly—in the high roads of public life, and in the by-paths and isolated lanes of private life—show in every relationship and position in society, that Christianity has made you holier, happier, nobler than the rest of mankind, and that it is not in vain that you have heard that a God has suffered that mankind might be redeemed.

LECTURE XIII.

WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING.

“ Then was the part of the hand sent from him ; and this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.”—DANIEL v. 24, 25.

I NOTICED, in my previous addresses, the circumstances that preceded the interpretation of this mysterious inscription on the plaster of the royal palace: I now beg your attention to the significance of each word of that inscription, but especially to one which seems most capable of affording improvement to us, namely, “*tekel.*” The word “*mene*” is twice repeated, simply to give emphasis to the word: “*mene, mene;*” literally, “*there is number,*” “*thy kingdom is numbered,*” or, “*God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.*” It is repeated merely to give emphasis, just as the words are repeated, “*thou shalt surely die;*” literally, “*dying, thou shalt die.*” “*Tekel, again, means simply, “he hath weighed;*” it is applied to the act of a goldsmith, who weighs the gold, and ascertains the amount of alloy, that he may separate it from the pure metal. The word “*upharsin*” is the plural number of the same word which is repeated in the 28th verse, “*peres;*” and, though it reads so differently to us, it is really one word, differing only in number, and the meaning of it is, simply and literally, “*is divided;*” and Daniel the prophet adds, in the prophetic spirit, the words or the commentary, “*and is given to the Medes and Persians.*” The word “*upharsin,*” or “*peres,*” has nothing to do with the word “*Persian,*” or the word “*Mede;*” this last is the explanation given by the prophet; and the inscription, literally translated, would be “*numbered, weighed (and, probably, found wanting),*

and divided :” and Daniel thus explains the mysterious enigma, by saying, “thy kingdom is numbered,” or the years of its existence are now completed; “thyself art weighed in the scales of the sanctuary, and found wanting; and your kingdom now is about to be divided among the Medes and Persians, your bitterest enemies.” Such is the meaning of the words.

God is represented as weighing all men; all their motives, their ends, their characters. It is a common scriptural expression, which indicates that it is meant by God that we should feel and realise this fact. For instance, Hannah said, “The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed :” David says, “Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance they are altogether wanting.” Again, Isaiah says, “Thou most upright dost *weigh* the path of the just;” and Solomon writes, “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord *weigheth* the spirit.” From these passages we learn that the idea contained in this inscription is one frequently found in Scripture, as applicable to all. It suggests to us many precious and important lessons.

Let us realise this one fact, that there is not a motive in one single heart in this assembly that the eye of God does not now see as clearly as if that motive were the only thing in the whole universe, and that God does not weigh with an exactness as complete as if the destinies of the universe depended upon this one result. Let every man in this assembly only realise this. It is important that I should ask you to do so: for I believe it is not increase of light that you need from the pulpit, so much as increase of power in the pew, that will make the light which you feel to become life, and the lessons that you know to be impressed with effect. Let us then try to realise this solemn truth; and if there be a God in heaven it is true, that there is not a motive in the depths of our hearts, there is not a design the most intricate, the most secret within us, there is not a crooked path you intend to pursue to-morrow, nor a crooked practice in which you intend to indulge next week, that

God does not now completely comprehend and unravel, the estimate of which God does not now form, and the doom of which is not denounced at a tribunal from which there can be no appeal. Psalm cxxxix. ought to be the expression of our feelings now. "Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me; thou art acquainted with all my ways; thou knowest my thoughts afar off." I have often been struck with that single clause in Psalm cxxxix., God "knows our thoughts afar off." While the thought looms in the distant horizon, before we have clearly conceived it ourselves in all the length and breadth of its dimensions, God sees it, knows it, and thoroughly appreciates it. By him all thoughts are estimated, all actions are weighed, and all desires are known. This is not the case with one individual more than another, or one degree or rank more than another. The Psalmist, in the passage I have already quoted, says, "Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity;" let the thought be in the heart of a monarch or a beggar, let it be the appropriated dishonesty of a penny, or the seizing violently of a kingdom—God sees it and notes it: and every deed that is done upon the earth, unrepented of and unforgiven, shall be heard in reverberating crashes throughout eternity; the crime containing in its bosom its punishments, and all eternity attesting that it is so.

But let me look at the words I have selected, and specially at the word "tekel," "weighed in the balance and found wanting," because it is to each individually and personally instructive. God weighs every man, we are told, in the scales of the sanctuary. He weighs them at the judgment-seat, and in reference to their everlasting state of happiness or of sorrow. There is placed, if you will allow me to prosecute the figure without exhausting it, or extracting more from it than it is meant to convey, in one scale, God's holy, everlasting, immutable law—that law which is, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and

thy neighbour as thyself." He will not subtract one atom: it is not "thou shalt love with *much* of thine heart;" but, "thou shalt love with *all* thine heart." It is not, "thou shalt love *with a large share* of thy mind," but "with *all* thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." This is placed in one scale: every man's character is placed in the opposite scale, and by its preponderance or its lightness every man's doom is fixed and decided accordingly. What have we to place against it? Years without thought, and days and nights without a sense of responsibility to God. Years of selfishness, and sin, and rebellion, and suspicion, and hatred, is all that man, the best amongst us, can place in the scale that is weighed against this. And needs it any logic of mine to demonstrate that when in the one scale there is a perfect unchanging law, demanding perfect, continuous, unswerving obedience, and in the other are sin and folly and shame, the inscription must appear upon the very scales that belong to the balance, "By deeds of law no man living can be justified?" "Tekel, thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting."

But suppose, in the next place, I keep still in the one scale, this holy, perfect law, demanding perfect love for God, and perfect love for your neighbour; and suppose I select the most accomplished, the most honourable, the most just, the most generous of mankind, (and all these traits are beautiful, because originally divine) and suppose I place this man, who has paid every debt, who owes no man anything, who is characterised by every social, national, personal, and domestic excellence—and all these things are most precious and most excellent; and I only wish that Christians were more and more adorned with them than they are—suppose I put such an one in the scale opposite to that which contains the holy and the unchanging law of God. What would be the result? That this scale must inevitably kick the beam. For, when the experiment is made, we must say to him, "Most justly have you done to man, but how stand you with reference to God? most generously have you acted in society, but how have you acted towards

God? you have kept the last six commandments of the law, I will assume, perfectly, but what have you done with the four first? you have loved your neighbour, I will admit, with all your heart; but have you loved God with all your heart, and mind, and strength? It is utterly impossible that a half-obedience can meet the requirements of a law, which demands whole obedience to every commandment and every section of it. You are not wanting if you are weighed against the last six commandments of the law; but you are "*tekel*," altogether wanting, if weighed against the whole ten commandments of the law. It will be no justification in the sight of God that you have been blameless towards man, if you have not been what God requires you to be towards him that made you, and gave his Son to redeem you.

But I will adduce another character, and weigh him. I will take the man who is not only just, and generous, and good in all the relationships of social life—and such men there are, bearing mark of man's original beauty and perfection which sin and Satan have not altogether effaced—but who, in addition, is most strict in his attention to what are popularly called "all his religious duties;" who is never absent from the Church; who belongs to the strictest and the most rigid sect in that Church; who is a punctilious observer of every ceremony; who never made a genuflexion too few or too many; who never was absent from matins in the morning or from vespers at night; never failed to bow at the name of Jesus; wore black on Good Friday, and dressed in white upon Easter Sunday; one who fasted while others feasted—is such a one who has been thus exact, thus punctilious, thus obedient to every ecclesiastical requirement, who has been thus baptised, thus confirmed, thus consecrated, thus dedicated, thus absolved—is he to be classed with the multitude of mankind?—is he, when weighed in the scales, to be pronounced "altogether wanting?" The answer is, God's law is not satisfied with ceremonies. You cannot pay your debts to God in rubrics. The sound will still thunder in your ears, Who has required this at your hand? God's law is, "Thou

shalt love;" your response has been, "I have performed." The decision must be, that with all your ecclesiastical ceremonies, and with all your social excellences, the first ecclesiastically perfect, the last morally exact, when weighed against the holy, unchangeable, unswerving law of God, you are "altogether wanting."

But I will add one feature more, and will assume this character to be perfected by another; that he is in all not only perfectly sincere, but an earnest inquirer after truth, anxious in all respects to know and do his duty. Surely such a one, when weighed in the balance, though he has erred and come short in some things, will be forgiven, in that he was sincere in the pursuit of all things. I answer, sincerity added to a sin does not make it virtue; sincerity added to a heresy does not make it orthodoxy. When one is sincere, we respect the man because he is so; but if he is in error, we do not the less condemn the error, because he is sincere that holds it. The sincerity with which he holds it makes us no less heartily denounce the error that ruins his soul. I have not a doubt that there are sincere Jews, sincere and enthusiastic Romanists, sincere Socinians and sceptics—I have no doubt of it. Their sincerity must make me treat them with respect, their error remains to be judged by him in whose word it is clearly and unequivocally denounced. Saul of Tarsus said, "I verily thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus." He was perfectly sincere; but he adds, in the retrospect of his sincerity, "Those things which were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ." The sincerest ecclesiastic, and the sincerest moralist, if unjustified by a righteousness without them, and unwashed in the Redeemer's blood, when weighed in the scales of the sanctuary, must be found "altogether wanting." There is not, in one word, a saint upon earth, the most excellent that ever breathed, who is not compelled at every moment to say, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" and there is not an enlightened and a Christian

heart that does not breathe, in the prospect of a judgment-seat, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight can no man living be justified." There is not a Christian in this assembly who knows what sin is, and what his own heart is, and how pure, how perfect, how infinite in its exactions is the holy law of God, who does not feel, "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who could stand?" Therefore there is not a Christian who, as he thinks of this dread balance, and of that most perfect law, and of his own deep and conscious defects, does not cry, and cry with unfeigned lips, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

How then can we meet this law? how can we escape the inscription "tekel," weighed and found wanting? Against the law is weighed for us the magnifier of that law. Against the law with its infinite demands, is weighed the infinite righteousness of him that made it honourable. Against the breach of that law is placed that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin. When we look at that law, the inscription impressed upon every soul is, "weighed and found wanting." But when we look at Christ, who is our representative in the prospect of the decisions of that law, then the inscription "tekel," weighed and found wanting, is washed away in his precious blood, and the glorious and illuminated characters are inscribed in their stead, "complete in Christ, without spot or blemish or any such thing."

I have looked then at man as weighed against God's holy law; and we have seen that by deeds of law no flesh can be justified"—that "weighed and found wanting" is our inscription by nature; and that justified, and complete, and accepted is only our inheritance by grace. I now take the expression "weighed and found wanting" in reference to Christian character. I put in the one scale not God's holy law, but I put in it true, though it may be not perfect, Christian character; and I wish you to look at various characters, as weighed against it, and see if we are among those who, thus weighed, are "found wanting."

In the first place, they are weighed and found wanting

who are not converted, or born again, or changed in heart and spirit. We are told in Scripture that the carnal mind is "enmity against God," and the unconverted man, however outwardly decorous, is the child of the wicked one. Now understand what I mean by regeneration. I do not mean baptism; I do not mean a decent outward change; but total transformation of character—a transition from a state of darkness, of distance, and of sin, to a state of light, of nearness to God, of holiness, and of happiness. I mean by it, not a mere ecclesiastical change, but life from the dead, or as it is called by the Apostle, "a new creature." It is not, as some persons call it, thoughtfulness. That is not conversion. It is not seriousness, but regeneration: it is not becoming thoughtful, but it is being converted. It is not outward conformity to any requirement, but a thorough, inner, radical revolution of mind, of preference, of wishes, of hopes. It is not religious excitement; it is not ecclesiastical zeal; it is not an inappreciable and minute change, but it is as complete in the soul as the symbol that indicates it, "being born again." Do not deceive yourselves in this matter: depend upon it, it is far easier to know if we are so than many persons are disposed to admit. Many get rid of the responsibility of ascertaining if they are so, by pronouncing it very difficult and very delicate. Certainly, to pronounce upon others is a very doubtful and delicate point; but to pronounce upon ourselves is not so difficult a thing as our own passions and prejudices lead us to suppose. I ask you, can the sun rise to his meridian at noon and shine upon the earth, and we be unconscious of it? Can the dead step forth from their tombs, and themselves not be aware of the change? Can the spring burst upon the earth, and make it break forth into blossom, verdure, and beauty, and we not know it? Can the slave be made free—the maniac be made rational, and neither of them be conscious that a great change has overtaken them? And yet all these changes are not greater, but very much less than that change which must pass upon every man before he can see the kingdom of heaven; for it is written, "Ex-

cept," and until "ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God." And therefore, my dear friends, whatever excellencies you may have outwardly—and I do not wish to depreciate them—whatever external accomplishments you may have—and I do not wish to deny them—if they were weighed, the brightest of them all, against the definition of Christian character, as given by the Spirit of God, will be found utterly "wanting." Then, if this be so, is there a question we can ask which more vitally concerns us than this,—Are we born again? are we shams or realities? are we Christians or worldlings? are we transformed by the Spirit of God, or are we still "dead in trespasses and sins?" If I have overstated the doctrine, then you may despise it; but if I have understated it, which is what I have done, then, my dear friends, carry home with you this night this deep, personal, individual impression, that whatever you may be, whatever you may have given, whatever you have suffered, whatever you have sacrificed, however you may have been baptised, at whatever church or chapel you may worship, "except you be born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God."

Let me, in the next place, state this,—men are "weighed and found wanting" when they are living, constantly living at this moment in the practice of any known, deliberate, and voluntary sin. It is true of every man at every moment, "if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves;" but it is as true of the Christian at every moment, that he wars against all transgressions, and becomes every day, like the shining light, more and more victorious. Do not in this matter deceive yourselves. If you harbour deliberately pride, vain-glory, avarice, ambition, murmuring, discontent, bitterness, evil-speaking, lying, and slandering,—if these sins you knowingly indulge in, then, my dear friends, you give evidence in so far, that you are not born again—that you have not the Christian character that will stand—that you are in the category and condition of those who, when weighed in the scales in order to ascertain if they are fit for the kingdom of heaven, have in them that

amount of alloy which destroys all the value of the gold : they have not reached the standard—they cannot be stamped with the impress of divine approval—they must be rejected as reprobate and worthless gold.

They, too, in the next place, are “weighed and found wanting,” who do not exhibit in their character the distinctive and peculiar features of the Gospel of Christ. Many men are constitutionally moral, and the man who is addicted to one sin from his constitutional temperament, is generally found the most eloquent denouncer of him who lives in the sin to which he is not naturally prone. There may be very moral men who nevertheless are not Christians. If I understand the object of the Gospel, it is not simply to make us moral, but to make us more than moral—“a holy nation, a peculiar people—a chosen generation, zealous of good works.” Surely Christ did not die—surely Pentecost did not dawn, in order that we might be just like the rest of mankind, in order that it might be very difficult to distinguish whether we are Christians or not. The little space between us and the world is proof. I fear the world has not made a nearer approach to us, but that we have made a nearer descent towards the world. If I read the Scriptures aright—and it is so clear in these cases that he that reads it may run while he reads it—Christians are a people distinguished and separate from the rest of the world ; they belong to an empire of glory and of beauty, so impressive, that the world’s enmity is provoked by the contrast. I ask you if you are the subjects of this empire ? if you, not separating myself from you, are characterised by the features of them who are heirs of God—who are followers of the Lamb—who are witnesses for Christ—who let their light so shine before men that others, seeing their good works might glorify their Father in heaven ?

All these, I would notice, are “weighed and found wanting”—wanting in their *fitness* for heaven, which is just as necessary as their *title* to heaven, of which I have already spoken. Never forget this great truth, that we need two things in order to reach heaven ; we need as

much the work of the Spirit of God within us to fit us for heaven, as we need the work and the righteousness of Christ without us to entitle us to heaven; and the man whose heart has not been changed by the Spirit's power, may depend upon it that he is destitute of anything like a title that will admit him to the presence of God and of the Lamb.

I have looked at man then as "weighed and defective" in his title; I am looking at him now as "weighed and defective" in his fitness for the kingdom of heaven: and I observe, that they are "weighed and found wanting," who take deeper interest in the affairs of the world than they take in those of Christ. One of the characteristics of earthly minds given by the Apostle is, "who mind earthly things." One of the characteristics of the people of God is, "whose conversation, *i.e.* their conduct, their sympathies, their feelings, are all in heaven. I ask you, what is the predominating tone in your mind, what is the great direction in which you are impelled? where runs, and to what runs the main current of all your sympathies, your affections, your hopes, and your desires? We are not, my dear friends, borne to heaven accidentally: no man goes to heaven but he that sets his heart thitherward. Ask yourselves then, Do you mind earthly things, or heavenly things? what is the aim, the object, the predominating desire of your mind? where is your heart? what is your treasure? for whom do you chiefly live? These are weighty questions; they are scriptural ones; your response to them will determine whether you are or are not wanting in fitness for heaven, and in real Christian character.

In the next place, they are wanting when weighed in the scales of the sanctuary, who do not aid the cause of Christ and its extension through the world by their prayers, their efforts, their means, and their exertions. If you be a Christian, you must be a missionary. I doubt if it be possible to be a Christian oneself and not to be consumed by an absorbing desire to make all the world Christians too. I ask, then, if, when you hear that there are minds unenlightened by the glorious

Gospel—that there are children uninstructed in the things that belong to their present and their everlasting peace—that there are Bibles needed, that there are missionaries to be sent, in order that the blessings of Christianity may be advanced, however poor your means may be, however inadequate to the demands and exigences of the case, can it then be said of you, as was said of the woman in the Gospel, “She hath done what she could?” If you were poor, or hungry, or thirsty, or naked, would you call him a friend who refused to give you food, and water, and raiment? But Christ identifies himself with all the needy upon earth, when he says, “Inasmuch as ye did it unto them ye did it unto me.” There cannot be the supreme love of Christ within you unless there is corresponding sympathy with God’s people without you. It is thus, then, that I have asked you to weigh your own condition against what seem to be the characteristics of a Christian, and to ascertain if, in the sight of God, you are those who are “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light,” or among those who give obvious evidence that they have no lot or part in this matter. I may apply the same great truth to official personages. Let me apply it to a minister of the Gospel. Such an one may be gifted, eloquent, versed in theology, outwardly moral, laborious in all pastoral duties; and yet, weighed in the scales of the sanctuary, he may be “altogether wanting.” Gifts need not be graces of the Spirit of God. There may be the eloquence of the gifted tongue, without the unction of the consecrated heart. There may be the ordination of the bishop or the presbytery, but not the consecration which God’s Holy Spirit alone can give. He may have all gifts, all eloquence, all theological knowledge, all polite learning—yet, if wanting in singleness of eye, unity of purpose, earnest devotedness to the true end of his office, the conversion of souls, and the glory of God, however he may be applauded by the tongues of men, weighed in the scales of the sanctuary, he, too, is “altogether wanting.”

So I may apply these words to a church. It may

have all that Cæsar can give—able ministers, a splendid literature, the rich and the great in its audience, and yet it may be wanting in all that constitutes the Church of Christ. The architect can build a glorious cathedral; Christ's presence alone can make it a Church. The builder may raise a magnificent edifice, the Queen's presence alone can make it a palace. The orator may preach so that the crowd may be thrilled with his oratory, impressed with his reasoning, riveted by his appeals; but he may not be a minister, and that crowd may not be a church:—"Where two or three *are gathered together in my name*,"—that is the essential—"there am I in the midst of them." No presence can compensate for the absence of this. No patronage can be a substitute for this. Laodicea said, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;" and at the very moment when she was saying so, Christ was weighing her in the scales of the sanctuary, and he pronounced of her, "tekel;" thou art weighed in the balances; "thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

In the same manner I may apply these words to a nation. It was applied in the passage on which I am now commenting to a nation—namely, to that great kingdom over which Belshazzar reigned. A nation may have brave soldiers, hardy sailors, gifted legislators, eloquent senators, prosperous trade, thriving agriculture, all the splendour and power, all the material strength of Imperial Rome, all the glory and the literary fame of Athens, and yet that nation, when weighed in the scales, may be altogether "wanting." Its aim may be territorial aggrandisement—its sole passion may be ambition—its eloquence, its efforts, its arms may all be exerted in favour of conquest and aggression—it may not be seeking the glory of its God, but the supremacy and the immortality of itself. Never forget that a nation's sinews are its Christians; its battlements are its principles; its guide is, or ought to be, the word of God. Real principle running through a land, pervading every institution, giving its tone to all its varied national crys-

tallisation—not expediency,—is power, and strength, and immortality. A nation has not done its duty when it builds gaols; it has not done all it ought to do, when it pays a police. There is something higher, nobler, more precious than all this; and if it fail here, when weighed in the scales it will be found to be “tekel;” and its doom is written, “Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin;” its years are numbered; it is weighed in the balances, and found wanting.

Such then, are some of the practical thoughts arising out of the words I have now read. Let me ask you now, in closing my remarks, to examine yourselves. Is there anything wanting in your title—anything deficient in your fitness for heaven? Forget not, my dear friends, that it is possible to be “almost a Christian,” and not to be saved. It is possible to reach nine points of Christian character, and to perish because you have not the tenth. To be almost saved, is only to be condemned with a more terrible judgment. The very height from which you fall renders that fall the more disastrous.

And, in the next place, let there be, after the examination of our hearts, deep humility. All that is in us is fitted to humble us; and the man that knows himself best will feel most humbled in the sight of God. All present will have some share in the common inscription upon the greatest and the lowest, “tekel; Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.”

And let us recollect, in the next place, that if, under a deep sense of the pressure of that perilous condition, we cry with our whole heart unto God, that he will save us—if conscious that we have not a farthing to pay we ask him frankly to forgive us all—if conscious that, when weighed against his law, we must kick the beam, and be found altogether wanting,—lest us fly to that righteousness which alone can justify us, let us seek shelter in that City of Refuge in which alone we can be saved—let us appeal to that cleansing blood which alone can wash away the inscription “tekel.”

and that righteousness which alone can constitute our title as "accepted and beloved." Each minute as it passes carries us nearer to the burial-place of the dead, and to the judgment-seat of the living. A few more years, and those faces that are now looking, I trust, with anxious thoughts, will be numbered with the dead, and our souls, those live sparks that never can be quenched—those great and sacred "bundles of responsibilities" which can never die, will have to stand at the judgment-seat of God, either shivering and looking into that unknown, unfathomed abyss of woe, or rejoicing, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and anticipating that joy, that inheritance, that blessedness which is incorruptible and fadeth not away. My dear friends, deal honestly with yourselves; have done with church, with ceremony, with sign, with sacrament, till you have settled this question, Am I a child of God, or am I not? I believe that nine-tenths of the controversies of the day are the devil's delusions to prevent men from settling God's great controversy, "Are we the children of God, or the children of the wicked one?"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

“*It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents, of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not charged, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house: and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*”—DANIEL vi. 1—10.

WE read in the previous chapters that great Babylon, the excellency of the Chaldees, had passed away, and that on the very night when the mysterious fingers wrote the long inexplicable inscription on the plaster, Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain, and Darius, the king of the Medo-Persian empire, mounted its forsaken throne and received the reigns of government. It was after this, and on the crumbling ruins of Babylon, that the Medo-Persian empire rose to splendour, and occupied its brief space in the history of the world. Darius, who was appointed to be king, was, of course, a heathen; but, heathen as he was, he saw something in the character and general conduct of Daniel, which led him to believe that there was no one more worthy of a dignified place, a place of power and responsibility, than Daniel; the Christian, as we may truly call him,—the Jew, as he nationally was. He had witnessed his skill in solving a mysterious inscription, a skill which indicated communion with the fountain of wisdom: he saw strongly developed prudence, integrity, talent, steadfastness, and even success in all he undertook; and, amid his own gross superstition, his eyes could not fail to distinguish so remarkable a subject, nor his own sense of propriety and advantage fail to see in that captive Jew a meetness for service as rare as valuable. They who do not understand a Christian's creed, will and do appreciate a Christian's walk. Heathens understand a pure and noble life, even if they do not comprehend an orthodox creed. We learn from the impression produced upon Darius by the conduct of Daniel—a conduct which there is abundant evidence to show was unobtrusive and retiring, that real Christianity cannot be hid. If you are not a Christian it is of no use for you to call yourself one, or to pretend to be one, for the eye even of the most casual observer will be able to penetrate the veil of hypocrisy, and detect the shame and pretension that are beneath; and if you are a Christian, you need not proclaim the fact in the market-place. Depend upon it, wherever real Christianity reigns in the heart, it will press outward and outward and unite its name and

impress its influence upon the place you occupy—the duties of the office entrusted to you—upon the family—the nation—upon all over whom, in the Providence of God, you are placed. If there be health in the heart it will bloom on the cheek; if there be vigour in the muscles it will show itself in your walk. If there be salt in the earth it will spread; if there be light, it will shine; if the city be set upon a hill, it cannot be hid; if the epistle be written by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle tells us it will be seen and read of all men. Or, in the words of another sacred penman, all that see them “shall take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus.” The man who walks with God, we are told by the Psalmist—the man who shrinks from the scorner’s chair, whose delight is in the law of the Lord, will not be hid, but he will be “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper.”

Trials and afflictions do not hide, but rather bring out only the more the Christian’s character; instead of darkening they brighten it; and many a one whom you have suspected to be a stranger to the Gospel, when placed in the furnace, displays the most beautiful and impressive sense of a long tried and deep union and communion with God. It is in affliction that the Christian shines: it is in the furnace that the dross is consumed, and the pure virgin gold glows in all its lustre and beauty: it is under circumstances of affliction and distress that divine graces are implanted in the heart by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, which will rise to the surface and prove to all men, what they cannot fail to notice in the character and conduct of real believers, “that they have been with Jesus.” And this irrepressible nature of real Christianity is matter of the deepest gratitude and joy. Are you not thankful that it is so? would it not be a pity that one truth in the Gospel should be capable of being concealed? what article in your creed would a Christian wish to hide? what fruit in that cluster of “fruits of the Spirit,” of which we read in the

fifth chapter of the epistle addressed to the Galatians, would you wish to conceal? Let the miser hide his gold—let the admired of all conceal her beauty—let rank be ashamed of its honours—let the infidel conceal his scepticism, but let not the Christian be ashamed of that which is the ornament of the earth, the beauty of heaven, which gives weight to the lightest, and dignity at once to the greatest and the meanest of mankind. Thank God, then, that Christianity cannot be hid; and that where it is, there it will be felt and seen, and men will own that it is so.

I may state, too, that it is this silent but continuous and irrepressible power of Christian principle, which really tells upon the world around us. It is not a mere syllogism that will convert a sceptic. It is not a powerfully constructed argument that will alone convert a Roman Catholic: it is not such specimens of Christianity as church and chapel often furnish, which will make men feel that Christianity is the ambassadress of God and the benefactress of mankind. It is when the world sees Christianity softening all, sweetening, subduing, sanctifying, inspiring, directing all—giving its tone, shape, and colour, and freshness to all; it is when the world sees Christianity in self-sacrifice—in submitting our own temper and our own inclinations to those of others—in giving way and suffering, rather than appearing to dictate and presume—it is in the quiet by-paths of human life, that Christianity acts with the greatest force, and in which, if detected by the sceptic, he owns there is there the finger of God, the evidence of a power greater and holier than human. So Darius saw Daniel's Christianity: he understood not his sublime creed, but he appreciated his honesty, his integrity, his truthfulness, his faithfulness. The world itself, if it do not practise, yet appreciates faithfulness and integrity. The merchant on the Exchange understands character, when he neither studies nor subscribes a creed. Hence the pulpit is not the only place for preaching.

Darius saw that integrity of conduct was an admirable qualification for a prime minister's office,—that the man

who prayed to his God was not the least likely to be useful to his king. Even the heathen Darius saw that the most admirable elements of political efficiency were, not party-zeal and partizan enthusiasm, but faithfulness, integrity, honour—all that constitute these moral characteristics, which are the creations of Christianity in their greatest brightness; and have been often, but less distinctly, illustrated even by the heathens in their deepest degradation. Darius unquestionably was right: the true Christian is ever the greatest patriot. The men who are restless, discontented, fond of change for change's sake, are not generally those who have family worship and well-read Bibles, and who are seen oftenest in the sanctuary; and on the other hand, the men who are most loyal to their sovereign—most attached to their country—most devoted to its best interests—most courageous on the field, most steadfast on the deck—most dutiful in all things, generally are actuated by motives inspired by the truth of God, and distinguished by actions influenced by the continual recollection of this great truth,—“Thou God seest me.”

It is no argument against all this, that there are hypocrites who make their pretensions to religion a passport to distinguished notice, or to political power. Whatever is excellent has been imitated ever since the world was. Never yet was there a coin current in a realm that was not forged: never yet was there a good bank-note that was not imitated. You do not say the thing itself is bad, because there is a mockery of it. You do not reject the good bank-note because there are bad ones in the market. It is one thing to be a Christian, it is another and a very different thing only to pretend to be so. And because there are some men who pretend to be Christians and are not, you are not therefore to suspect that every man who seems to be a Christian is not so. In your own conduct, rather be suspected not to be a Christian than sound a trumpet to proclaim that you are so. Let your Christianity be an inference that the world might draw in the exercise of its reason, rather than a proclamation in the market-place.

Daniel did not proclaim his religion. He did not thrust himself into the palace of Belshazzar, and because he was faithful to his God he did not therefore act discourteously towards his king. But the instant he was sent for he appeared, and he acted as a Christian ever will. He did not use his religion in order to obtain political power : he did not make his communion to be a passport to political office ; but he lived as a Christian, and left the world to notice him or not, as the world pleased.

Daniel was promoted to be prime minister in one of the greatest empires on which the sun shone. But, like many prime ministers of every country and of every age, the elevation to which his virtues raised him created envy, calumny, and suspicion. I doubt whether elevation in this world is so desirable a thing as man's ignorant ambition makes him think. He that is placed upon the loftiest pinnacle, "the observed of all observers," is sure to create, or at least see projected around him, a dark, long-drawn shadow of envy, jealousy, suspicion, and all uncharitableness ; not because he acts inconsistently, but because self-seeking and dishonest spirits, ever enmity to truth and integrity, the highest beauty, hate the man in proportion as he is the personation of them all. They disliked Daniel, and they could not say why : they could not veto him, because he was a royal appointment ; they could not dismiss him, for they had not the power ; and Daniel occupied, therefore, the most painful and perplexing of all positions,—an honest prime minister presiding over a dishonest, an anti-christian, and an unmanageable cabinet. They could find, however, no fault or cause of complaint against him, so they determined, in their envy and malignity, to create one. They endeavoured to find out that his policy was bad—that he had been open to bribery—that he was unfaithful, but they did not, and could not, succeed ; they could find none occasion or fault, inasmuch as he was faithful in all things. He was a perfect phenomenon in an Eastern court, where bribery ever has been, and is, to this day, universal, and where a bribe can blind the eye of justice, or shut the mouth of truth, or promote or

put down, just as the man in power thinks most expedient, or most conducive to his own interests. They found that Daniel, however, was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Why, then, did they so dislike him? why hate this good man? Plato asserted, that if Truth were to come down from heaven, and display itself in all its glory upon earth, all men would instantly fall down and worship it. What Plato stated as an hypothesis, inspired history records to have been a lamentable miscalculation on his part. Truth came down from the skies—appeared upon the world in untainted glory, beauty, and perfection; neither hell nor earth was able to detect a flaw in it; but so false proved the prophecy of the learned and accomplished philosopher, that the world rose up against it, and shouted in a voice of thunder,—“Away with him, away with him! crucify him, crucify him! Not this Man, but Barabbas.” If Plato had known what the child in our Sunday-school or ragged-school is now being taught, that “the heart of man is enmity against God,” he would not have uttered any such prediction.

What was the fault his cabinet urged against the detested Daniel? First, he was a comparatively young man, while many of these princes and counsellors were probably aged men: he was a junior promoted over the heads of his seniors; this was an old offence, and an offence that is felt in every profession. But when the junior displays intellect, genius, talent, discretion, prudence, heroism, devotedness, such as his seniors do not display, all will soon learn to forget that he is young, and to feel that it is not years, but excellence, that constitutes the requisite to command the veneration of mankind. Probably they also hated and envied him because he was a Jew. Religious prejudices are not extinct even amid the light of the nineteenth century. We do not like to see one promoted who is not of our sect; we are offended if one of a rival party is advanced to power. And these men were worshippers of Bel: they assembled in the temple of Bel for worship; and they were indignant that a worshipper of Jehovah, the God of the cap-

tive and detested Jew, should be advanced to the highest post of honour and authority in that great empire. And partly, perhaps, they hated and envied him, because he was a stranger and a captive. Daniel was one of the spoils of war,—a slave; and though of royal family, he was held as a captive in the midst of Babylon; and the haughty princes of that mighty monarch could not endure the insult of a Hebrew slave being made chief ruler over all of them. But the grand reason, in which they all concurred, no doubt was, that Daniel's integrity stood in the way of their enrichment. He would not take the bribes which they were accustomed to receive; he did not approve of cheating, which they thought was canonical, and had made almost legal; they loved the wages of unrighteousness, while he hated them; and, like bold, bad men, they detested him, and determined on his destruction. The great difficulty was, where to obtain a pretext for getting rid of him. They could find none whatever in his management of the kingdom: he dispensed his patronage with perfect justice; he redressed the wrongs that were submitted to him with the greatest impartiality; he gave such good counsel to his gracious sovereign, that all that that sovereign did prospered. They could find nothing against the character of Daniel as touching the kingdom over which he presided with such dignity and justice, and with so remarkable success. But they saw that he had a different religion; and if they could not impeach him as a prime minister, they might assail him through the dogmas of his creed as a Jew. They proceeded with great skill and artifice, and formed the scheme recorded in verses 6—9. "The presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree."

The quiet self-possession of Daniel on this occasion was complete. "Now, when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a-day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." We are not to be the slaves of circumstance, but circumstances are to be slaves to us. I am not to do wrong because circumstances urge me to do so; but I am to do right in the face of all danger, and in spite of all threats. We have continually, in the army and in the navy, instances of military self-possession the most remarkable, showing how even the natural man may be drilled into a state of discipline, subordination, and obedience to a human leader, that will make him fearless amid all the elements of terror and of death. I recollect reading, that when Marshal Massena was marching at the head of a body of Napoleon's victorious troops, through the gorge of the Cardinell, in the Alps, a vast avalanche descended from the heights above, and swept into the valley below some hundreds of his soldiers; and on the very ridge of the snow that was swept into the ravine beneath, was a drummer-boy, who, undisturbed amid the peril, continued beating the march he had commenced before the avalanche fell, until every soldier had passed through the gorge; this was his own funeral march: he then sank down to die,—an instance of the effective discipline which then prevailed in the French army. One of Napoleon's greatest marshals never felt himself perfectly calm and self-possessed till the dead fell in thousands round him, and the tide of battle seemed rolling against him;—showing how human nature, in circumstances of great trial, may feel great calmness, and do its duty with unshaken and unflinching nerve. But if discipline can do this, Christianity can do more. It could make Daniel calm in the prospect of certain death; it could make Polycarp regard the flames only as a chariot that wafted him to glory; it could make the Apostles feel bonds, imprisonment, and death, to be not calamities, but blessings, because they took

them from scenes of suffering, and conveyed them to the realms of glory. A Christian has ever felt,—and in proportion to the depth and force of his Christianity he ever will feel, that “the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever.” “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.” And I believe that, if our Christian principle were what it should be, and what we are responsible for its being, though the mountains were cast into the midst of the sea, and though the earth should shake and vibrate with the swelling thereof,—though all things should seem to prognosticate the return of chaos, ruin, and destruction,—a Christian would hear and accept, sounding from his Father’s lips, those beautiful and soothing accents, “Be still, and know that I am God.” So Daniel learned and felt.

Would that our confidence in God were deeper than it is! we should not then be in the depths to-day and in the heights to-morrow; we should not be so often surprised, alarmed at this, and afraid of that. Do not think, my dear friends, that you and I are indispensable to the government of God. God governs; he controls the universe and all its movements; and he is working out his own bright and beneficent designs sometimes with us, as often without us, and occasionally in spite of us. Have confidence in God, confidence in our Father’s love, confidence in his wisdom,—a deep and indestructible persuasion that “all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.”

But in looking at the manner in which Daniel discharged his duty, there seems at first sight to be in it something like ostentation, or something, at least, rather inexplicable as to its absolute necessity, in the attitude which he assumed. It is stated, that *his windows being open*, he kneeled upon his knees, in his chamber, towards Jerusalem, and prayed in that direction. What was meant by his thus “praying towards Jerusalem?” We have it explained in the prayer of Solomon, at the dedi-

cation of the temple, in which he says, "If they," thy people "sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy far or near: yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness: and so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cause."

Hence every pious Jew, when he prayed, "kneeling upon his knees," or stood, the other attitude of prayer, according to the custom of the Jews; and, wherever he was, directed his face invariably towards Jerusalem. The reason why the Jew did so, was, that the temple and the furniture within it constituted the only type that he had of Jesus, the great Mediator between heaven and earth. He rested his eye upon the significant sign of the only Mediator every time he prayed, and did in that dispensation by a figure, what we in this dispensation do in fact—prayed in the name, leaning on the intercession, trusting to the mediation of Jesus. But if you were to argue, as certain very superstitious persons do argue, that because the Jews did so in the days of Levi or Solomon, therefore we, too, when we pray, ought to turn our faces towards the east; or, if you were to contend that when we build churches we should build them with their chancels, or what some ignorantly term their altars, towards the east, you would be just doing precisely what the Galatians did; letting go the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free: there would be in that fact a reflux to Judaism. You are

thereby displacing Christ, the only Mediator, and substituting an exhausted type, a shrivelled symbol, in the room of him who is its substance, its reality, and its end. The law of the worship of the Jew was, "Pray with the face towards Jerusalem;" the great law of the worship of the Christian is, "Pray in the name of Jesus." What constituted the Church with the Jew was, his having that very temple, those very stones, that grand altar, those overshadowing cherubim, those bright beams of the ineffable glory; but what constitutes our Church is, not dead stones, but living ones; not the glory that is visible and palpable, but that bright glory which consists of the mingling beams of mercy and truth that have met together—righteousness and peace that have kissed each other. And hence there is a Christian Church, and a true and acceptable worship, wherever, on the sea-shore or on the mountain-side; on the tessellated pavement or in the public highway; within the communion rail, in the pulpit, or in the pew; on the deck, in the city, in the field; in the deepest mine to which the miner can descend, and on the loftiest pinnacle to which the Alpine herdsman can climb; wherever there are two or three met in the name of Jesus, there is a temple more glorious than that of Jerusalem; there is a temple of the Holy Ghost, in which God dwells, and where all his glory is manifested in another way than that in which he manifests it to the world.

We see then the reason why Daniel prayed, looking toward the east. But it certainly does, at first sight, appear somewhat difficult to reconcile his conduct, in having his window open, with the idea that there was nothing in what Daniel did resembling pride, ostentation, or the needless thrusting forward of his custom in the face of the heathen nation among whom he dwelt. It is best explained by the fact, that the Jews' houses were built with flat roofs, and on the top of each flat-roofed house there was what is called in the Acts of the Apostles "an upper room," not corresponding to our garret, but a sort of chamber built upon the flat roof, in

which the pious Jew sequestered himself from the world ; read the law, prayed and held communion with God. And in the Septuagint translation of this very book—*i.e.* the translation from the Hebrew into Greek, executed by the Alexandrian Jews three hundred years prior to the birth of Christ—the word that is used for “his chamber” means, literally, “he retired ἐν τοῖς ὑπερώοις,” the very word that is used in the Acts of the Apostles to denote the place in which the Christians met at Pentecost, and where they were accustomed to worship God. And from the Acts of the Apostles it is evident that the upper room was the ordinary place, the most sacred and the most sequestered of all the rooms in the house, whither the Jew betook himself for prayer. And when Daniel therefore retired to his upper room, with the windows open towards Jerusalem, it was not for the purpose of displaying his religious firmness, or for the purpose of defying those whom he knew to have conspired against his life, but he did that which he had always been accustomed to do,—prayed with his face toward Jerusalem, and seeking the blessing and the presence of his God. It is thus in this simple fact then, and in this beautiful habit, that you have a chapter of the inner life of Daniel, the prime minister of Darius the king of Persia. His inner life was fed by prayer ; his outer life was characterised by integrity, faithfulness, and justice. It was his home habits that made his court habits so beautiful, and just, and true ; it was his private nearness to God that sustained and elevated his public consistency before men. I hope there are such statesmen still who preface their policy by their communion with God. Would it not be the loftiest dignity, were the highest in the land to prostrate themselves before the King of kings, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and not seek to devise, to meditate, to plan, till first there had been implored an abundant blessing from Him, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is wise, nothing is holy, and nothing can prosper. An hour in “the upper room,” in communion with God, before spending many hours in the

House of Lords or in the House of Commons in transacting the business of the empire, is a recommendation worth all the political qualifications that a man can have. Depend upon it, that God will not bless in politicians what he does not bless in private men,—the habit of trying to work the world without God. Depend upon it, he will not prosper measures in the high places of the earth which he will not prosper in the humble places of the earth, when those measures are concerted and attempted without recognising him. It should be written on the heads of princes, on palaces, and cabinets, “By me kings reign and princes decree justice.”

And is it not a privilege, as well as a duty, to have prayer? I need not dwell upon the nature of prayer; for I trust there is not a Christian in this assembly who knows not what it is. It is not a thing to be taught: it is the deepest instinct of humanity. It is, in my judgment, just as natural to pray as it is to breathe. And what the Spirit teaches—without whose teaching prayer will not be the incense that rises to heaven—is to pray for things that are truly good, in the name of him through whom those things are given; and in every Christian’s heart such prayer is an irrepressible instinct. He cannot live without it, he cannot move without it. He feels that a prayerless man is a graceless man; and that the enterprise he commences without asking God to bless it, is one in which he can expect no great success. God asks the tribute of your acknowledgment of him, and he will give you all the blessings of success; “for whatsoever such an one doeth shall prosper.” Pray in your closets; pray in the house of business; pray when you are walking upon the highway. Shut your doors; sound not the trumpet; make no display; but lift the heart daily—three times a-day if you like—at stated hours, and in stated places, if you like, for these remind you of the habit; but “pray.” Pray that God would give you grace for each day, (for there is only promise for the day,) that he will give you bread for each day: that he will give you “forgiveness of your sins, and an inheritance among all them that are

sanctified." Great soldiers of our country, the great Washington of America, prayed upon the field of battle; prayed under that stern and terrible necessity of nations where men made in the image of God take part in the dire shock of battle,—prayed, at such a crisis, that the God of justice would decide the conflict. Let us pray, in approaching a communion-table, in approaching the judgment-seat at which we must appear; knowing, that whatsoever we shall ask in the name of Jesus *believing*, he will give it us. Pray, and you will prosper upon earth; pray, and you will find your prayers on earth lost in the praises of eternity, through Jesus Christ.

LECTURE XV.

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS.

“Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.”—DANIEL vi. 16.

LOOKING at the whole treatment and experience of Daniel, one cannot but feel how truly our Lord spoke, when he said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” It needs but a very limited acquaintance with the history of the people of God, to see that the most illustrious and the most distinguished of them have been the victims of the most continuous and unmerited suffering. They have been stoned, they have been sawn asunder, they have been tempted, they have been slain with the sword: they have wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, in dens and caves of the earth, being destitute, afflicted, tormented,—although the world was not worthy of them. And yet through that faith which overcame the world, “they stopped the mouths of lions,” says the Apostle, alluding to the case of Daniel, “and quenched the violence of fire,” alluding to the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. When the world sees Christians, like Daniel, thus condemned, set apart for punishment and inevitable death, it exclaims, “God hath forgotten him: he trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he hath pleasure in him.” But amid all the taunts of the world, and the revilings of the worldly-wise, the child of God can hear, notwithstanding the clamour of a thousand tongues, the still small voice, the voice of his Father in the skies, sounding in his heart, unspent by the distance through which it

passes in its transit, and saying, "I will never leave thee. I will never forsake thee. A mother may forget her infant, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb, yet will not I forget thee." And thus, in spite of the world's clamour, and because he hears his Father's voice, the Christian enjoys in the world peace, quietness, and assurance for ever; and when he is placed in the lions' den with Daniel, or walks amid the flames of the burning fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; whether he is crucified with Peter, or cast to the wild beasts with Paul, he can begin, in the agonies of death, the pæan of a noble victory,—“I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus my Lord.”

I need not say that when Daniel was thus condemned by the king,—and condemned by the king who was ensnared by the subtlety and wiles of these wicked men,—he expected death, and that death a very terrible one. Death is not a natural thing: it is the most horrible and unnatural of all things. Man was never made to die: it was never God's design that he should die; he was made instinct with all the yearnings, and arrayed with all the powers of endless life. And when man shrinks from death, there is nothing unchristian in it. Paul did not desire death for its own sake, when he said, “I desire to be unclothed,” or, “I desire to depart,” but he was willing to meet the foe for the sake of the victory; he was willing to pass through the swelling of a dark and stormy sea because of the land of beauty and of blessedness that stretched beyond it. Nature shrinks from death; but Christian nature, even in its agonies can exclaim,—“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God that giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ.” But when the Christian dies, it is not the Christian himself, but death that dies. When the Christian dies, he does not cease to be. When the loved, the near, and the dear have

ceased to communicate with us—when the eye that looked upon us, and the lips that breathed her name, are closed, he has not ceased to be. He has only begun to be as he never was before. Death to the Christian is not even a momentary suspension of the continuity of life: it is only the removal of the restrictions and the trammels of this life: it is the Levite laying aside the coarse garment in which he ministered as a Levite in the outer temple, and putting on the sacerdotal and coronation robes in which he shall minister as a priest and a king in the inner temple of God his Father. And in such a case,—in the case of Daniel,—if he had died when placed amid the ravenous wild beasts, death would have been but the precursor of truly living; the lions' den would have become, in this case, only the vestibule of glory; the flame that consumes the martyr's flesh is the chariot that wafts his soul to immortality and joy; and the evening twilight of this world does not close upon the eye of that happy spirit till the morning twilight of yon world bursts upon it with a brightness of eternal day. Thus we like not to leave the old house, every nook and cranny of which is dear to us; but if we could only fix our hearts more upon the house not made with hands,—if we could think less of all that is seen, and feel more of the magnificence and glory of the unseen that awaits us, we should rather long to depart, than desire to remain, that we might be with Christ, which is far better.

The language here addressed by Darius to Daniel, is language which proves, I think, when taken in connexion with other expressions of the same monarch, that king Darius was an altered man,—that something transpired in the life, and was heard in the language of Daniel, which led the sovereign to think, and, by the blessing of God, to think savingly. He sought to save Daniel, and he could not. We must not imagine that kings, because they may be called absolute, are really practically so. Nay, it is the monarch of all who is often the greatest servant of all; and he who occupies the loftiest position, and seems to us to have only to speak

and it shall be done, is often the man who is least able to do what he pleases to those that are beneath him. Darius was unable to reverse his sentence; but he said to Daniel, and said it plainly, not in scorn, not in bitterness, but as a prophecy,—partly a prophecy, partly a prayer,—“The God whom thou servest continually, he he will deliver thee.” It is plain, from this, that the king had been brought to the knowledge of the true God. And, connected with the last verse of this chapter, which contains so remarkable a decree, it is a plain proof that he had learned and felt the truth which he here speaks, not in scorn, but in solemn and painful earnestness. And what must have been the cause, next to the grace of God, of the conversion of the monarch? I have no doubt it was the meekness, the magnanimity, the gentleness, the patience, the submission of Daniel, a prisoner chained and sentenced to a terrible death, connected and associated with the lessons that Daniel spoke, and the prayers that Daniel offered, and the religion of which Daniel was the consistent exponent and the living illustration. And what does this teach us, my dear friends?—That the means of conversion to others are not only the truths that Christians speak, but the lives that Christians lead, and the death that Christians die. Sick-beds have exceeded pulpits in persuasive eloquence, and dying martyrs have made conversions that living ministers have never been honoured with. No Christian lives to himself, no Christian dies to himself; and wherever a Christian is, there is an element of power wielded for God. In the silent prison, and in the Inquisitor’s dungeon, and in the Papal fires, the sufferers have all emitted testimony for God, and proved to history and to mankind that God does not cease to reign when his children are persecuted, and that the truth does not die with her martyrs; rather that Christianity has received a greater impulse, and has made greater progress by the opposition of her foes, than by the eloquence and advocacy of her friends.

But the words are not only expressive of the pity of the man, but they are, if I may use the expression, an

unconscious prophecy. God has often made use of men who were not Christians, as well as of those who were, to predict truths of which they themselves knew not the glory. Thus we read in the Gospel of John, that Caiaphas, being high-priest that year, "gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that some one should die for the people." Thus God made Caiaphas the trumpet of a glorious prophecy, just as before he made Cyrus the battle-axe by which he chastised the enemies of his people. God thus teaches man (for man needs to know what a very little creature he is in his sight), and he teaches Christians, what Christians more and more feel, that all things are under the power and control of him who holds the reins and sways the sceptre of the universe.

We read that Daniel was dropped into the lions' den, as a pebble is dropped into the silent sea, apparently to be forgotten for ever, and the world seemed to have its way, and the persecutors of the prophet to have had their will. But man's thoughts are not God's thoughts, nor God's ways man's ways. The persecutors of Daniel, when they placed him in that den, and put that heavy stone over him, and sealed it down, believed that no voice could rise from its depths to excite sympathy, and that no cry could come from the martyred prophet to arouse the popular indignation, and still more that no trace of the foul murder they had endeavoured to perpetrate, could remain to witness against them.

They returned to their homes; and never did they drink so freely, or sing so merrily, as when they recollected how successful they had been in putting out of their way a man who would not connive at dishonesty: that feared God, and rather than compromise his allegiance to his God, was willing to live poor, and to die a martyr. They rejoiced, and congratulated each other that the witness who prophesied against them was at last disposed of.

As for the poor king, he went home, still giving evidence that his heart had undergone a change, filled with remorse for having signed the fatal decree, and not

knowing how to retrieve or to retrace his steps. When conscience echoes in the depths of the heart, it will cause the loins of the lord of Christendom to tremble. It is not nerve that is bravest, it is a conscience full of the peace of God which passeth understanding. But when conscience is vexed with a sense of sin, there can be no heroism, there can be no presence of mind, there can be no peace. All the opiates that physicians can prescribe will not give sleep unless God is pleased by a conscience cleansed in the blood of Jesus to give his beloved sleep. And when there is sin in the conscience, what awful, what mysterious power it has! It will pierce the armed battalion, it will enter within the thickest walls of the palace, it will invade the secret chambers of royalty, it will defy all opiates, it will hush all music; and though all sounds should be suppressed outside, and all books be shut, and all testimonies be silenced, that conscience grieved, wronged, offended, acting as the echo and the oracle of God, will reason, even in the royal bosom, of "righteousness and temperance and judgment to come," and make the possessor of it tremble, and his knees smite against each other, and be ill at ease.

Early next morning the sleepless monarch rushes with the first rays of the rising sun to the den, and, as he then thought, the grave of the murdered prophet; and half hoping, half despairing, rather as the expression of his deep commiseration than as the expression of any hope, he looked into the den and asked if the prophet was alive; and Daniel, with that calmness which a conscience at peace can alone impart, with that supreme self-possession which Christian principle can alone create, with that loyalty to his king which Christians ever have expressed, called out, "God save the king." And his second accents are giving glory to him who had sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths and save him from so terrible and cruel a death. God is everywhere. You cannot banish a saint from God. You may banish him from his home, or from his country, you may bury him in the cave, you may seal him in the lions' den; you may cast him into the depths of the sullen and unsounded

sea; but you cannot banish him from his God. On the top of ancient Ararat, when it was surrounded by its first rainbow coronal, God saw, pitied, and blessed his people. In the depths of the lions' den, and among the beasts ravenous with hunger, God was present, and heard his praying prophet. In the silent catacombs of Rome; amid the sands of the untrodden desert, or on the waves of the great and silent sea; on the heights, wherever man has soared; in the depths, wherever man has descended; there, if there be a Christian heart, will be found a present help, a Christian's God. How blessed is this thought! the poor Roman Catholic cannot have his God unless he has his consecrated altar; he cannot obtain absolution unless he has access to his priest; he cannot have his sacrifice for forgiveness unless he has his priest, altar, and wafer. But the Christian—let him be the miner in the depths of the dark mines of Northumberland, has there his priest, his altar, and his sacrifice, even Jesus; or let him be placed on the loftiest pinnacle to which Alpine herdsman can climb, there he finds a temple, a sacrifice, and an altar, even Jesus. If he ascend into heaven, he is there; if he descend into the grave, he is there; if he take the wings of the morning and go down into the depths of the sea, even there is his Lord and Saviour too. God's eye can pierce all darkness; God's heart can pity his captive anywhere, and God's hand can help him in spite of all obstacles. So Daniel felt, and so thousands of God's saints have felt it too.

When the king found the captive alive, he commanded the den to be opened, and Daniel to be taken out; and, as eastern monarchs often did in the exercise of a rash and passionate revenge, sinful, improper, and unworthy of him as a Christian, and injurious to him as a monarch, ordered men who certainly deserved it, but to whom showing mercy would have been a brighter jewel in the regal crown,—he commanded those men, their wives, and their children, to be cast into the lion's den as a punishment for their cruelty and perfidy. Do not say, "This book is not from God," because it states this. It does not describe the cruel conduct of Darius as right;

it simply narrates the fact. It does not say the king did what was merciful and good ; it simply states his deeds. These men were most guilty : whether their punishment exceeded their crime, it is not for me to pronounce—but this certainly they found, that he which made a pit and digged it, is fallen into the snare which he laid. Josephus, the Jewish historian, recording this fact, mentions the following circumstance :—he says that when Daniel thus wonderfully escaped the lions' den, the princes said that the lions had been previously surfeited with food, and on that account it was that they refused to touch Daniel. The king, out of abhorrence to their wickedness, ordered that a great deal of flesh should be thrown to the lions, and when the beasts had filled themselves with the flesh, he gave further orders that Daniel's enemies should be cast into the den, when they were all destroyed.

This is the statement of an uninspired historian, and of course must be taken for what it is worth ; but these Persian princes were plainly very much like some of our modern philosophers, who account for every phenomenon without admitting the element of God. If pestilence comes, it was the want of ozone, or volcanic action that occasioned it. If pestilence is removed, it was the cold weather that removed it. The thermometer becomes their God, and weather-phenomena the other idols they worship. So these princes said, It was not God that saved Daniel : no doubt the lions had been well fed, and therefore they spared Daniel. The experiment, according to Josephus, was tried ; and the result proved that God delivered Daniel, while the lions devoured his enemies ; not because their flesh was sweeter to their taste.

We see, in his preserving Daniel from the lions, the evidence of a great fact,—namely, God's power over the beasts of the earth : he is able to stay their fierce propensities, when, and where, and under what circumstances he pleases. When Adam was created, there is no doubt that the beasts were at peace with him, and at peace with one another. There is no evidence that

what are now called carnivorous animals ate flesh before Adam fell. I know well the difficulties of the case. I know there are traces of death among the great Saurian tribes long before Adam was created; as geologists have clearly shown. I am perfectly satisfied that this orb is probably hundreds of thousands of years old; Genesis records merely the present collocation of its surface, the creation of man, and all that relates to man: and there is no doubt that fossil remains have been excavated from the bowels of the earth, among which one animal has been discovered petrified in the jaws of another; showing that, prior to the creation of man, this earth has existed in a chaotic or inferior state, in which there was death and mutual destruction among the lower animals; and some of the best and ablest of our scientific men have doubted whether animals were originally made to live for ever, arguing, that if animals had never died, the earth, according to our present notions, would have been over-filled and over-stocked with them: and that death among the lower animals is no part of the curse pronounced upon man,—“In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” I know there are great difficulties in the subject: at some future time I hope to look more minutely at them; but of this I am quite persuaded, that when man was created, and the animals were brought to him to receive their names, they were at peace with him, and at peace with one another. And I am as persuaded of this, that what are now called the carnivorous animals did not then feed on flesh. I know the medical men and physiologists in this congregation will smile at what they will consider my ignorance, because we know that the structure and physical economy of the animal that feeds on grass is quite different from that of the animal that feeds on flesh. Their respective viscera differ greatly. No doubt of it. I do not say that there is no difficulty in the point; but I am stating this fact, on the authority of God, that when God created man, he said, “Behold, I have given thee every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which

is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every herb for meat: and it was so." Man, in innocence, did not eat animal flesh. We have no evidence that the permission was given him till after the flood; and what do we, therefore, gather from this fact? That animals were not slain in order to supply man's wants till the deluge. It is plain, too, from the passage I have read, that the stronger carnivorous animals did not originally feed upon the flesh of the weaker animals; and the presumptive inference, therefore, is, that all animals, the lion and the lamb, the wolf and the sheep, were at perfect peace with each other; and that when they were so, they presented only a dim foreshadow of that better paradise, when, as I believe, it will literally come to pass, that "the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and a little child shall lead them." I know some will ask, How can you understand that prediction literally? You may recollect what I told you in a previous lecture,—the prophecy of Zechariah was, that Christ shall come, "riding upon an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass." Our spiritual and figurative interpreters would say this does not mean that the Messiah will come literally seated upon an ass, but that he will come in very great humility. But when you turn to history, you find the minutest particular fulfilled,—that Jesus so came, so riding upon an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass. And in the same manner I understand those glowing descriptions of the millennial day, when all things shall be renewed, when the High Priest who is now in the holy place shall come forth, and pronounce, as creation's High Priest, creation's grand benediction,—a benediction which shall ascend to the heights, and descend to the depths, of all created things;—I believe, upon the testimony and authority of God, that all creatures shall again recognise man as their lord; and that lion and tiger, and fish of the sea and bird of the air, shall all do him homage as creation's

king, God's vicar upon earth. God gave token of this, when he showed, as I explained to you in discoursing on the miracles of our Lord, that though man has lost the reins, God still holds them. And hence there are scattered throughout the Bible instances of a similar kind,—where the ravens bring food to the prophet; where the dumb ass, at God's bidding, preached a sermon to the disobedient prophet; and where the fierce lions, as in the example before us, revered the flesh of the sainted man, and dared not touch him. God has but to speak, and the curse shall be withdrawn; sin shall be obliterated, and all things become beautiful, harmonious and happy, and the world blossom into paradise.

Looking at Daniel's miraculous escape, let us never cease to have confidence, under all circumstances, in God. Do not look at things, but look at the Lord of things. Do not calculate what shall be by what you see, but calculate "how safe is that mother's child," to use the language of Hooker, "whose trust is in the Rock of ages, the Lord Jesus Christ." If God be your foe, or rather, if you be his, all creation shall bristle with enmity and hostility to you; but if you be God's friend, and God your friend, the winds shall make music to you, the waves shall joyfully bear you, as their ornament, not their load, and all things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.

The monarch, thus impressed with the truth of Daniel's faith, and struck with the interposition of Daniel's God, issues a decree,—a decree which certainly shows his profound and solemn conviction,—enacting that the God of Daniel should be worshipped and adored, and accepted throughout the whole earth. There was much in this decree that did credit to the monarch: there was much in it that displayed his thorough ignorance. The king issued a decree, commanding men to lay aside the creeds that they loved, however wrong they were, and to adopt a creed that was new and strange to them, however good. The

king forgot that the despotic monarch of the East might lay his hand upon the property, or his sword upon the life of his subjects; but that there is a holy place of humanity, the conscience, into which even a royal hand is not permitted to enter. And when kings suppose that they can dictate creeds to their subjects, they assume a power that does not belong to them, and a power it becomes lawful instantly to resist. Intellectual convictions and conscientious impressions are created by truth, and they never can be coerced by force. I will tell you what I think the king should have done: instead of trying to persecute his subjects into the true religion, it would have been better if he had called every Christian throughout the land of Chaldea, all the friends and fellow-sufferers of Daniel, and sent them out, two and two, throughout all Chaldea, telling them to go and proclaim to all people, to all his subjects, of all tongues, and of all tribes, that Jehovah is the living God; that his dominion, to use his own words, is an everlasting dominion, and that Daniel's creed is the creed of truth. But his decree that men should become Christians might create uniformity in subscription to a creed, but it could not produce unity of conviction, or heartfelt adoption of the truth that he thus forced upon his unwilling subjects. Never, my dear friends, let us believe that truth can be aided by force, or that a lie can be burned out by the fire. If the sword is to be unsheathed, let it be unsheathed not by the friends, but by the foes of the Gospel of Jesus. The weapons of our warfare are mighty; and mighty just because they are not carnal. But while the king's decree was wrong, inasmuch as he tried to force conviction where truth alone could create it, yet the truths which he embodied in his decree were grand and beautiful. He said, God is the living God. Jupiter is a dead god. Bel is a dead god. Mars is a dead God. But Jehovah is "*the* living God." And he spoke truly when he said, "and his kingdom shall not be destroyed." Why, what is the history of the world? Dynasties have changed, and thrones have tottered, and crowns

have been tossed as baubles, and sceptres have been snapt as infants' toys; vicissitude, and change, and decay have seized upon and made sport of the brightest and the noblest of created things; but there is one kingdom that emerges more beautiful from wrecks,—the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christianity still holds on her upward and her onward career. Persecution has tried to destroy her power, or crush her influence; but all history attests what the Bible confirms, that no power of man can permanently build up a lie, and that no hatred of man can permanently injure the truth of God. "He," says the monarch in his decree, "maketh signs and wonders;" and he does so still. The flower that germinates,—the bud that bursts from the stem,—the spring of the year, which if it came only once in a hundred years, would be the wonder and the admiration of the world,—these are all evidences just as decisive of the signs and wonders of his presence and his power, as the miracles he wrought in Palestine. There is just as much of God's signs and wonders, and mighty power, in making my living heart continue to beat, as there was in making Lazarus's dead heart begin to beat again. What philosophers call phenomena, the Bible calls the signs, and wonders, and the tokens of the living God. He guides still by his hand the orbs that Newton discovered: he mingled those beautiful colours that Newton was the first to untwine. He buried the Saurian tribes before man was created. He knows all the discoveries that science will make, all the creeds that theorists will form, and all the projects that diplomatists will propose. He makes, by his almighty power, the wrath of man to praise him. He causes obstructions to aid the progress of the Gospel, and all things to work together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose.

Thus, then, we have seen Daniel in the den, Daniel delivered, and the monarch praising, and acknowledging, and thanking God.

In concluding my remarks, and especially in pleading the claims of my schools, which I do in this lecture, let

me remind you that all the excellence and the Christian heroism that Daniel exhibited, was, as we are told at the beginning of the book, mainly the result of early religious education. Daniel as a youth was educated in the Gospel, and therefore Daniel as a man lived according to the Gospel. And how did he show his Christian principle? Just as I wish, and as you would wish, your babes to show it. When he was told that if he prayed he would be put to death, that if he confessed his religion he would bring down upon himself the shame and the disapprobation of others, he cared not what man might say; he only thought of what God would think. And therefore, my dear friends, we are to teach our children, when they are entering upon any duties in the world, not to submit to public opinion, but only to defer it; not to fear the censure of the sinful, or the thoughtless, but to do right because it is right, and to cleave to duty just because it is duty. Let our children be taught to bow circumstances to duty, never to bow duty to circumstances. We have nothing to do with circumstances but to conquer them: ours is duty, God's the issue.

A second feature in Daniel was self-sacrifice, another result of his early education. He was ready to give up his honours, his profits, his life, but never, never to give up his confidence in God, his belief in the Gospel of Jesus. Accustom your children to self-sacrifice. Accustom them to be ready to give up their money, their plans, their play, when the requirement of a higher duty demands that they should do so. Accustom them to give to the claims of humanity, to the cause of God. A boy parting his only apple with his schoolfellow, looks to many as a mere childish act: it is a sublime and significant fact. Daniel had parted his apple with his schoolfellow before he grew up to part with his life, if needs were, at the bidding of his Father and his God.

Teach your children, like Daniel, to shrink from everything like recrimination. When Daniel was accused, how meekly he bore it! when unjustly sen-

tenced, how gently he took the sentence! not one word of acrimony or retaliation fell from his lips. But what do many of you sometimes teach your children? You tell your boy, when he is struck by another boy, "Show a little spirit; retaliate." Nay, I have seen the nurse in the nursery doing a most mischievous thing, by teaching the little-child that had accidentally struck its head against a table or a chair, to beat and scold the table or the chair by which the accident happened, thus instilling into its mind the principle of revenge even with its mother's milk. It is a lesson too soon and too readily learned. How much better to teach your child the lesson we read in our Saviour's sermon on the mount: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you!" Daniel had better teachers and better schooling, and therefore retaliation—"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"—was no dogma in Daniel's creed.

Daniel was plainly a child trained to prayer. Teach your children not only the words, the sentiment of prayer, but teach the *habit* of prayer. Teach them by a form, but tell them also to lift that little beating heart when the tongue must be dumb and give no expression to its feelings, and to think of our Father, who so loved us and gave Christ to die for us. Teach them to pray, and to seek a new heart from the Spirit of God, who alone can give that new heart. Pray that you may see them made Christians first; they will be churchmen or dissenters soon enough. See that they be Christians; leave all the rest. Teach them, as Daniel had been taught, Christian courtesy. But draw courtesy for your children not from Chesterfield, but from the Apostle Paul. There is a great deal in refinement. I like to see children good, but I like to see them self-sacrificing. What is the highest Christianity? Giving way to your neighbour in all that can please him, without any sacrifice of principle or duty on your part. What is the highest mark of courtesy, the great evidence of a true gentleman? It is yielding to the convenience, the

comfort, and happiness of another. Teach your children so to act. Teach them at your own table: don't say, "It is only home," it is only your own dining or drawing-room, and therefore the child may do as it likes. Teach them to do at home as you wish them to do abroad, and then they will do abroad without restraint that to which they are accustomed on the principle on which that issue is sustained.

Thus then Daniel showed in his grown-up life the graces which he learned in his earlier years. Those great reforms which are to revolutionise the world must begin in the nursery. From the first moment that the child leaves its cradle, to the last moment that he spends at the university, there must be Christian instruction bestowed upon him. Education of the head without education of the heart is worse than no education at all,—it is not worthy of the name of education.

LECTURE XVI.

THE PAPACY.

I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judg-

ment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart."—DANIEL vii. 16—28.

THE four chapters on which I have discoursed on successive Sunday evenings have been evidences of the power of real religion, when the upholder and advocate of that religion was persecuted and oppressed. The sixth chapter, on the last verse of which I addressed you last Sunday evening, closed the personal biography, if I may so call it, of the prophet Daniel, presenting to us a specimen of Christianity in ancient times, as beautiful as it was rare, and showing us that if Daniel, amid such circumstances—a captive, persecuted, oppressed, misrepresented, cast to the wild beasts, denounced to his king—exhibited under such circumstances, and amid the darkness of an age on which the Sun of righteousness had not fully risen, such constancy, such attachment to his principles, such hatred of everything like compromise or concession of the truth, such devotedness to God, such a martyr's spirit amid more than a martyr's sufferings, "How shall we escape if," amid intenser light and with greater privileges, "we neglect so great a salvation?"

Before proceeding to expound the passage I have selected, I should like to read to you a sketch which has been drawn of the prophet Daniel by an ancient writer, which I hold in my hand.

"It was this love of God which made his greatly beloved Daniel prosperous in adversity, that gave him freedom in captivity, friendship among enemies, safety among infidels, victory over his conquerors, and all the privileges of a native in strange countries: it was the love of God that gave his greatly beloved 'knowledge

and skill in all learning and dreams.' It was this love of God that delivered him in danger—from the conspiracy and malice of the Median princes; from the fury of the lions; that sent one angel in the den to stop their mouths, and another angel at another time to bring a prophet on purpose to feed him; that signally avenged him of his enemies, and did by a miracle vindicate his integrity. It was the love of God that sent the angel Gabriel to visit him—to be his interpreter—to strengthen, to comfort, to encourage him; to reveal secrets to him, and to assure him that his prayers were heard. It was the love of God which gave him the spirit of prophecy—that excellent spirit, that spirit of the holy gods (as the Babylonians styled it), by which he foretold the rise and period of the four monarchies, the return of the captivity, and wrote long beforehand the history of future ages. But beyond all this, it was the love of God that presented him with a clearer landscape of the Gospel than any other prophet ever had; he was the beloved prophet under the old dispensation, as John was the beloved disciple under the new, and both being animated by the same divine love, there was a wonderful harmony between them; both of them had miraculous preservations—one from the lions, the other from the burning caldron; both engaged young in the service of God, and consecrated their lives by an early piety; and both lived to a great and equal age—to about an hundred years: both had the like intimacy with God—the like admittance into the most adorable mysteries—and the like abundance of heavenly visions: both had the like lofty flights and ecstatic revelations."

Such is the sketch of the prophet given by an ancient writer, as comprehensive as it is beautiful and true. I spoke last Lord's day evening of the safety of Daniel when cast among the furious wild beasts, because of his attachment to his God and his devotedness to his religion. I cannot but read here also a beautiful passage from the justly-called judicious Hooker, which is founded upon this incident,—Daniel's preservation in the den of lions.

"It was not the meaning of our Lord and Saviour, in

saying, 'Father, keep them in thy name,' that we should be careless to keep ourselves. To our own safety our own sedulity is required; and then, blessed for ever be that mother's child, whose faith hath made him the child of God. The earth may shake, the pillars of the world may tremble under us, the countenance of the heaven may be appalled, the sun may lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory; but concerning the man that trusteth in God, if the fire once proclaimed itself unable to singe a hair of his head—if lions, beasts ravenous by nature and keen with hunger, being set to devour, have, as it were, religiously adored the flesh of the faithful man,—what is there in the world that will change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the affection of God to him? If I be of this note, who shall make a separation between me and my God? 'Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?' I am persuaded that neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, nor death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall ever prevail so far over me. I know in whom I have believed; I am not ignorant whose precious blood hath been shed for me; I have a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power; unto him I commit myself: his own finger hath engraven this sentence on the tables of my heart: 'Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed that thy faith fail not;' therefore the assurance of my hope I will labour to keep as a jewel unto the end; and by labour, through the gracious mediation of his prayer, I shall keep it."

Such is first a sketch of the life—such is a grand exhibition of the safety enjoyed by Daniel, and not only by Daniel, but all who have like faith, like love, and a like God to serve, to glorify, and to honour.

I now enter upon that passage which is in some degree a repetition of what has been sketched before.

You recollect that a great image appeared to Nehuchadnezzar, having a head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and the thighs of brass, and the feet of iron, and these feet divided into ten toes, partly clay and partly iron, which, apparently cohering together by the great law of attraction, were never made permanently to do so. And I explained, in expounding that passage, that the vision related by the prophet was a description of the doom of Babylon; the second, the Medo-Persian empire; the third, the Macedonian, under Alexander,—the brass-coated Greeks; the fourth, the Roman, or the iron empire divided ultimately at the breaking up of the empire into ten kingdoms. These ten kingdoms preserved in every century more or less distinctness, and although Charlemagne made the effort in one century and Napoleon in a subsequent century, to extinguish the ten kingdoms, and to erect the fifth empire composed of all the empires of the world, God's Word was found to be stronger than the sword of Charlemagne, or the iron crown of Napoleon, and the ten kingdoms still remain, and God's prediction still stands true. You have now the very same historical facts—and this will prevent the necessity of again dwelling upon them—sketched in this chapter, under the symbol of beasts. The first was revealed to a heathen king; the second is disclosed to a holy prophet; and while it is perfectly true that God sometimes uses his enemies to be the exponents of his truth, it is generally true that “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

But the very repetition of this passage shows that there must be importance in it. Surely God does not reiterate trifles. I ask you, Do those men treat the Scripture with that reverence which is its due, or God with truly responsive gratitude, who tell us that we ought to pass over such passages as these, as if our duty were not to pray and labour to be able to explain, and, if possible, to understand whatever God has written for our learning? And yet I have heard ministers of the Gospel speak as if it were to their credit, that they

were so dazzled by the glories of Palestine, that they could not spare one glance at what they think the humbler and the more misty beauties of Patmos. It does seem to me that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness;" and if God saw it to be for his glory to write it, surely the least response that we can give is, to make it our study to understand it. Of course it becomes us never so to dwell upon one part as to give a disproportionate attention to the rest. These historic and prophetic pictures are the few and the far between; and we are only to discourse upon them on Sabbaths that are few and far between. The great, saving, vital truths of the Gospel are to be the woof and the warp of every sermon; the sum, the substance, the core, the life, of every appeal. But when such passages as these—historical, it is true; prophetic, it is also true—come before us, in the ordinary course of our ordinary reading, it becomes us to look at them, and pray for light to understand them, and to gather from the tree that God has planted leaves that shall be for healing, and fruit that shall be for food to the people.

These four kingdoms, then, are now depicted under a new symbol. The first symbol was the image composed of different metals; the second class of symbols are four wild beasts; the first, a lion with wings; a hieroglyph in one respect; because this composite animal alone could express what was the mind of God, and denote the strength and courage that combined with them the speed and progress of the Babylonian empire. The second symbol, or type, was the bear,—the symbol of Persia, and expressive of its cruel and savage nature. The third was the leopard,—the Macedonian leopard, with four wings, to give a greater idea of the rapidity of its conquests; and with four heads, into which the empire of Alexander was divided after his death, and the dominion that was given to them. And then the last, an animal, not named, but described,—“dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, stamping the

residue with the feet of it, and diverse from all the other beasts,"—plainly the Roman empire, represented by the iron feet and toes of the great image. It had also ten horns. The horn is always used in Scripture to represent power: it denotes, in prophetic language, a dynasty, a political empire. This last wild beast, of terrific power and strength, and irresistible victories, was to have upon his head, as the hieroglyph expresses it, "ten horns." These were the ten kingdoms, symbolised in the former image by the ten toes, into which the Roman empire was to be divided; these ten kingdoms I have enumerated in their order, in the course of my remarks upon the great image; and I therefore forbear to repeat them now. These ten horns, or kingdoms, have existed in every age since the empire came into being, and are in existence at the present moment.

Then there was to spring up in the midst of the ten horns, a "little horn," politically and physically small, but from its pretensions and its assumptions, terrible and influential. This little horn was to pull down three of the ten horns. Now, is there any one fact in history by which this is borne out, and which shows how truly this prediction has been fulfilled? This I will look at by-and-bye; but, in the meantime, let me call upon you to notice that these four wild beasts arose from the ocean, or the great sea, convulsed and agitated by the four winds that swept it; teaching us that these governments were to arise from social chaos, or, if I may so express myself, that society, torn and convulsed to its centre by the antagonistic passions of those that compose it, should be driven to have recourse to rule, government, and authority, in order to preserve it from utter extinction; to consolidate its powers, and maintain harmony within; to defend itself from the aggressions of enemies without. But these governments that were to arise are here called "wild beasts;" denoting what, after all, has been the character of those great empires, and of every empire that has not the Gospel of peace to perfect, to sanctify, and to cement it. What has been the history of nations, in the past?—they have

raised themselves to ascendancy by force or by fraud; and they have maintained that ascendancy generally by force or by fraud also. War has been the pride and the glory of nations in the past. Coercion has been the language of the most illustrious emperors; and the sword cast into the scale, as in the case of Camillus of old, has been the justice which nations have meted out, and kings and great kingdoms have called in. A wild beast is the true symbol of a nation, a dynasty, or a kingdom that knows not, and coheres not by, the cementing influence of the Gospel of Jesus. And when we know that this is the character of nations, how fervently should we pray for the advent of that blessed period, when the spear shall be turned into the pruning-hook, and the sword shall be beaten into the plough-share;—when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and the only sceptre that shall sway the nations from sea to sea, shall be the sceptre of the Prince of peace, the righteousness, the love, the mercy, of the Son of God.

I have noticed that this last wild beast, the fiercest, or the most powerful of all, had ten horns; or, as I explained to you, was divided into ten separate and independent dynasties. Of these I have already given you a list, as they exist at the present moment, with the slightest shade of differences, in the modern European nations. In the midst of all these, there was to arise a little horn; plainly a political dynasty, like the rest, but with very great moral, personal, and distinctive peculiarities. This little horn was not Mahomet, or Bramah, or Confucius, because it was to appear in the midst of the other ten horns. It spread from the head of the wild beast, amid the ten horns, or kingdoms, which first arose; and it was, like the other horns, a political dynasty; but it differed from the rest in this respect, that it had eyes for seeing, and a mouth for speaking. We are, therefore, taught that this power should be a combination of the power of the seer and the speaker, the *ἐπίσκοπος*, and the priest, and the political speaker. It should be “a horn,” having poli-

tical power; but should have eyes; the origin of the Greek word *ἐπίσκοπος*, from which is derived the English word episcopacy, signifying "one that oversees;" "one that sees and looks over other persons;" and the name given to the prophets of old is "a seer;" "one that sees." The ecclesiastical character of this little horn is, therefore, plainly indicated by the peculiar feature that it was to have eyes for seeing, or superintending those that were beneath it. And not only was it to have eyes, but it was also to have a mouth, speaking great things; a preacher of proud pretensions, or a doctor of despotic laws; an enacter of canons, or rules for government and for regulation.

Then you will notice another feature in it, that it was to uproot three out of the ten kingdoms. Now if I apply this little horn where I think it is indisputably applicable, to the Papal power that now reigns at Rome, I think you will find every feature of the prophecy met and embodied in the history of that power. The three kingdoms that were rooted up by this little horn were the three kingdoms of the Vandals, Ostrogoths, and the Lombards, who were, after a succession of troubles, rooted up by the Papacy and constituted into the states of the Church. Now here is a very remarkable coincidence. Can this be accident, that there is here a description of a little horn, an ecclesiastico-political power, which was to root out three horns or kingdoms that preceded it? And you find in the history of Europe that the Papacy has destroyed, partly by force and partly by fraud, long ago, three of the estates of the ten into which Europe was divided; and the Pope wears upon his head at this very moment the tiara or three-crowned cap, to denote the three kingdoms or horns which he rooted up, and over which he now reigns.

Then you will notice that this power was to have a mouth speaking great things—a mouth by which it claims to be the vicar of God, and to have the keys of heaven and hell. It assumes the language, and arrogates to itself the attributes of Deity. A mouth which assume.

what bishop never assumed before, and claims an intimacy with the world of spirits such as God never vouchsafed to any creature upon earth. The Pope professes to see into the realms of spirits; to read and to make known God's hidden, unsearchable, and inscrutable record; and pronounces, by declaring that he sees, what is the doom of the lost that are in woe, and the destiny of the saved that are in glory; and can, for payment, facilitate the escape of the sufferers in purgatory, and can canonise and constitute into saints, to be worshipped, those who are the inmates of the latter.

But the better way to show how this prophecy is fulfilled is to refer to some of the great things that this horn speaks. Do not say that it is of no importance to explain this. Whatever God has written, it is the duty of the minister to endeavour to expound. Here is a prophecy that this episcopal ecclesiastico-political power was to have, in the first place, a mouth that should speak great things. Let me read to you very briefly what I myself have collected, at considerable labour and pains, from among the "great things" which this mouth speaks. I might give you, not my description of the things, but the very things themselves, as I have taken them from the writings in which they are contained. The bull of Pope Sixtus V. against the two sons of wrath, as he calls them, Henry of Navarre and the Prince de Condé, is one specimen amid many of the pretensions put forth by the Papal power. You say perhaps, "these are obsolete." What was infallibly right in the sixteenth century cannot be wrong in the nineteenth. These pretensions never have been diluted, still less repudiated. The Pope claims jurisdiction over all the kings and governments of the earth; though, thanks be to God, I think his political sovereignty is gone substantially, never to be wielded again with anything like success over the nations of the earth; though his spiritual power, in our own land especially, seems to be making progress to a degree unprecedented since the Reformation.

In making these arrogant assumptions, "the mouth," as it is here called, proceeds upon the assumption that

Peter was the chief of the apostles, and that the Popes of Rome are the successors of Peter. There is not the least evidence in the Bible or in history that such was the case. In the first place, when the apostles contended which should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord, instead of setting Peter before them and saying, "Here is your superior," took a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "He that is greatest of all shall be servant of all." Was Peter constituted an ambassador? So was Paul. Did Peter receive the keys? So did Paul. And Peter, in his epistles, styles himself only an "elder:" "I who am also an elder . . . unto you who are elders." Did Peter receive the power of binding and of loosing? So did Paul. Do not we read that the apostles "*sent Peter and John,*" &c., and that St. Paul rebuked Peter to his face? And if we ask the present pontiff to trace his succession to Peter, we shall see that Honorius the Monothelite, and Liberius the Arian, had not the succession in doctrine; Alexander VI. and Gregory VII. had not the succession in holiness. The popes do not preach, as Peter did. The Pope's shadow does not heal diseases, as Peter's did. And in all these respects, and in many others which might be mentioned, the succession seems to have failed, and the Popes of Rome to have become the successors of Judas, not the successors of Peter the fisherman of Galilee. There is left then only "a mouth speaking," not proving, "great things."

But these "great words" are said to be spoken specially against the Most High. What are the assumptions of the popes? I will quote what I have copied literally from Baronius, the celebrated Roman Catholic historian, in his annals; such epithets as these bestowed by such high authority on the Roman pontiff: "the sovereign of the Church;" the "head of the Church;" "our Lord;" the "high-priest and pastor;" the "chief doctor;" the "master;" the "father;" the "judge of all." (Baron. An. 34.) "It is idolatry to disobey the Pope's commands." (Greg. VII. ch. 4.) And that he speaks great words against the Most High, I show you

from Bellarmine, the great cardinal and upholder of the Church of Rome, who says: "Si autem Papa erraret præcipiendo vitia vel prohibendo virtutes, teneretur ecclesia credere vitia esse bona et virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare." (Bel. de Rom. Pont. vol. i. p. 546. Prag. 1721.) "If the Pope should err by commanding vices or prohibiting virtues, the Church would be bound to believe that vices were good and virtues bad, unless she wished to sin against conscience." I have quoted these words not at second-hand, but from the works of the author, which I have been at the pains to consult. These indeed are "great words" against the Most High. But there is other and equally strong evidence: Jesus said, "Drink ye all of this cup;" the Pope says, "The laity shall not drink of it." God says, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them." In most of the Roman Catholic catechisms that I have seen, that commandment is either left out altogether, or "bow" is changed into "adore," though the meaning of the original is strictly "bow," because the attitude of the body was forbidden, lest there should be the feelings of the soul immediately following or accompanying it. And the Pope permits images to be reared, crosses to be adored, and the bread upon the altar to be worshipped. God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother;" the Pope substantially says, "If the father be a heretic, the son is bound to reveal him." God says again, "Thou shalt not steal;" the Romish doctors say that "small thefts are only venial sins." God says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" the Romish catechism, as printed and published at Rome, says, "Remember the festivals to keep them holy:" "Recordati di sanctificare le festi." We have here then "the mouth speaking great things and words against the Most High."

Sanctissimus Dominus noster, "our most holy Lord," is the appellation given to the Pope by the Council of Trent. (Decretum super petitione concessionis calicis.

Conc. Trid. sess. 22, cap. ii. p. 223. Paris, 1837.) "All power is given to thee in heaven and earth," are words addressed to Gregory VII. (Binius, vol. vii. p. 484.) It would be tedious to quote all the evidence afforded by documents, monuments, official claims, and accepted titles, of the idolatrous and blasphemous pretensions of the popes of Rome. "The mouth speaking great things" is too characteristic, too graphic, to escape the application I have given.

Another feature that identifies this little horn with the Papal power is the prediction that "he will make war with the saints." The whole history of Europe is painfully conclusive evidence of this feature. It was a pope who raised the crusades against the Albigenses, and carried them on until the whole province was depopulated. It was a pope that instigated Alberic III. to make war against the Paulicians in the East, till, within a few years, one hundred thousand were put to death. Aquinas, the celebrated casuist, said that "the goods of heretics were to be confiscated, and their lives to be taken away." Bellarmine says, "It is not enough to put heretics in prison for the extinction of their tenets, which go forth from prison walls and taint the fold; therefore it is best to send them to their own place." When we look back to the persecutions to which the Albigenses, the Paulicians, and the Waldenses were subjected, and when we become acquainted with the sentiments and doctrines of Rome's most eminent and accredited upholders, we can have little doubt that the power which thus made war against the saints is "the little horn," which grew up amidst the ten; for all history in all its chapters, and the word of God in its most solemn sentences, declares that that power has been "drunk with the blood of the saints." It was the retrospect of such cruelties which made Milton exclaim—

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold.
Even they who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones
Forget not. In thy book record their groans

Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
 To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
 O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple tyrant, that from these may grow
 A hundred-fold, who, having learn'd the way,
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

It is true the Pope does not now persecute, unless we should quote Dr. Achilli as an instance of an attempt to do so; but you are not therefore to conclude that his principles have changed, for they are precisely the same. It is not because his taste has been improved, for the instance of Achilli shows that it has not; but it is because the freedom of the press, the spread of popular liberty, the mildness of the governments of Europe, and the progress and triumph of enlightened education, have, by the blessing of God, brought it to pass that the Pope's power is limited to his church provinces. And the system of Popery seems to me at this moment to totter, waiting for that tremendous crash which shall sink it like a millstone into the depths of the sea for ever and ever. The oath of every Romish bishop is persecuting: "Omnes hæreticos persequare et impugnabar." Force and fraud are the two main pillars of the Popedom.

Thus then I have looked at these two points: first, the heathen kingdoms that were to emerge from the chaos in the convulsions of the earth; next, the ten kingdoms into which the first was to be split under the symbol of horns; next, the little horn that sprung up amid the ten, and therefore in Europe; next, the three that were to be pulled down—the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards—by this little horn; next, the evidence of its fulfilment in the Papacy,—a see, an episcopal power, with a mouth speaking great things and words against the Most High, and making war with the saints and the people of God. And then we have explained, in another portion of the chapter, the length of time during which this politico-ecclesiastical power was to make war with the saints. It is in ver. 25: "They

shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Every writer upon prophecy is satisfied that a "time" signifies, in prophetic language, a year; "times," two years; and "the dividing of a time," or "half a time," half a prophetic year. But as a prophetic day stands for a literal year, so a prophetic year consists of 365 prophetic days, or 365 literal years. A time, times, and half a time, make then, when added together, 1260 days, called by St. John in the apocalypse 42 months. We are to understand, then, that the saints of God were to be given into the power of the ecclesiastico-political despotism for 1260 years. If we begin to count this period from the time when Justinian issued his pandects, and constituted the pope not only the ecclesiastical pontiff of Christendom, but armed him also with power to punish heresy with death, then the 1260 years ended at the epoch of the French revolution in 1792; and certainly, by the blow it then received, anything like the power of persecution on the part of the Papacy has been destroyed. Its principles remain—its ability only is broken. If, however, you begin to count the 1260 years from the time when the Pope first put forth his claim to be universal bishop, A.D. 256, this calculation would bring you down to the year 1517, when the Reformation began and the Papal power was broken. Taking either of these two epochs—and either of them may be the right one,—from either 1517 or 1792 the power of the Papacy to persecute has practically and substantially ceased. And if this be the case, the fears of some Protestants that the Pope will again get the upper hand in England, and that he will sway our sceptre, and occupy our throne, and direct our parliaments, are, in my humble opinion, perfectly absurd. If there be truth in the propositions I have stated, then there is not the possibility of such an event, for God has said that the saints should be given into his hand for 1260 years. Those years, I think, have expired, at the earliest in 1517, at the latest in 1792; and therefore, whatever temporary success the Papal power may attain in England—whatever proselytes it may make from the

Tractarian clergy—whatever adherents it may gather from the tainted laity—I do not believe that the papal power will ever attain political ascendancy in England. I do not think there is the remotest possibility of it.

But I do not dwell longer upon this. I draw two or three practical lessons, which will perhaps be more useful. First, then, predictions of the increasing power of the papacy are given, in order to be to us increasing evidence of the truth of the word of God. I have shown you that a perpetual miracle would destroy itself. The present miracle is that the grass grows in spring and withers in autumn. If it were to be reversed, and grass were to grow in autumn and wither in spring, whatever God ordained would be found to be the natural thing. The present law is, that the dead are buried and do not rise; but if it had been the experience of eighteen centuries that the dead should rise twelve months after their burial, we should pronounce it to be no miracle, but the natural law or order of things. The miracles that we see around us are the springing of the grass, the blooming of the flowers—the productions of the earth. All these things are just as much results of the touch of God as the turning of the water into wine, the raising of the dead Lazarus, or the feeding of the five thousand with a few loaves and fishes; only we are so accustomed to these phenomena, that we call them, in our language, “the laws of nature,” and frequently forget that they are the evidences of the presence of God. But prophecy is not liable to this objection: it is a miracle of accumulative power. The evidence becomes stronger every day of the origin and inspiration of the Bible: one brings a city like Nineveh, pale and ghastly from its grave; another discovers some great phenomenon in distant lands, or another brings from science some new and long hidden fact that men have never detected before, or discovers some new medical power that *bears a relation* to the curse, and seems to be an instalment of the day when that curse shall be transformed into a blessing,—we have all these growing and accumulating proofs of the authenticity

and inspiration of the Bible, and that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And thus the longer the Bible continues to give, by the fulfilment of its prophecies, accumulating evidence of the inspiration of God, the clearer will be our convictions that the Bible is true.

Another reason, perhaps, why the prophecies were given, is to show the perfect harmony between the Old Testament and the New. Read the records of Daniel which he wrote in Babylon; read the apocalypse of John recorded by him in Patmos, and you find that the facts, the historic facts that they pre-intimated, are substantially the same: and that Daniel and John were both taught from the same wisdom, inspired by the same God, and spake as they were moved by the same holy influence.

Another reason why God has so largely depicted in Daniel, so minutely described in the apocalypse, and so vividly sketched in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, the great Papal power that was to arise, was that "forewarned, we might be fore-armed." And, if ever there was a day when it was needful to disclose a system whose spires sparkle in the rays of rising and of setting suns, but underneath which are dungeons so dark and dens so cruel, it is surely in a day when the rush and current of the religious movement of the age seems all to be rolling and hastening towards Babylon. I heard Mr. Newman, the most distinguished convert that Rome has recently made, arguing, and in eloquent and impressive terms, with those who are called Anglicans; and he assumed the ground which the Church of Rome has so repeatedly marked out, maintaining the doctrine of a perpetually visible Church, which might fall into incidental errors, but by no possibility into absolute apostasy; and I declare that if I believed that dogma, I should, after having heard his argument, feel it my duty to leave the Church of Scotland or the Church of England, and to join the Church of Rome. His reasoning as addressed to Messrs. Maskell and Bennet was irresistible. There is no ground that you can stand on but this—Evangelical

religion, the Christianity of the Bible, the religion and the cement of the saints of God, or, the Church of Rome—not a corrupt Church, but the Babylon of the Apocalypse, the great apostasy that is delineated here and in the Eepistle to the Thessalonians. If the Church of Rome be only a corrupt, reformable Church, the reformers ought to have remained in it and tried to make it better: but they felt it what Luther maintained it to be, that it was the Babylon of prophecy, and heard sounding in their ears the commission of their God, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues.” I do not wonder that the Church of Rome practically prohibits the perusal, or at least the interpretation of the Bible. It contains her own picture so plainly, so vividly, so unmistakably sketched, that if she allowed the Bible to be read, he that runs would read that picture, and fasten the brand where the spirit of God has fastened it eighteen centuries ago—on her. Take care then, in these days, of any approach to that system. Your dogmas of apostolical personal succession—baptismal regeneration—a perpetually visible Church—these are the postulates that Mr. Newman asks. Grant him these, and the Pope will hold Saint Paul’s and Westminster Abbey in a very few years. I repeat it again, my dear friends, the only ground on which we can stand, is this, that the Bible alone is the rule of faith—that justification by faith alone is the article of a standing Church—that regeneration by the Spirit of God alone is the article of a living Church. Without this justification by faith, there is a fallen Church. Without this regeneration by the Spirit, there is a dead Church. Concede these, and you may, without any great sacrifice, and consistently enough, concede all points besides. Never forget, then, my dear friends, that the great safety of the people of God is cleaving to the Bible; and that the great secret of the Apostasy of Rome is, the elevating of human authority into the place of God. Here is just the whole spring and source of the mischief. Remember this, that neither the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, nor the House of

Commons of Great Britain, nor the Convocation, is any authority with me as to what I am to believe. Neither the Bishop of Exeter in the one, nor our own beloved and gracious Queen in the other, constitute the rule of faith. It is not the Bible explained by the bishop, nor the Bible explained by the presbytery, but the Bible alone, that is the rule of faith of all true Christians. Once concede that you are to look at the Bible through the lens of the presbytery, or through the telescope of the bishop, and you give up your great and strongest citadel, and you are sure to fall into the hands of the enemy. Cleave, then, to that blessed book as your only rule of faith—the arsenal of the soldiers of Christ—the armoury of the saints of the Most High. The oracles of God are as fresh and beautiful as when first taken, like a leaf from the tree of life, and committed to the nations. The Bible is a lamp ever bright, a light ever sure. And be not satisfied with holding the Bible in your hand; hold it also in your heart. We are strong, not by possession of the Bible as a book, but by the embodiment of the Bible as a living plastic, regulating faith. It is God's truth *within* us, not God's truth *without* us, that is the strength of Christians, the safety of the saints of God. Show, then, to the Church of Rome—show to the world at large, that we have a succession that never fails—the succession of the sons of God; that we have a religion which is ever beautiful, and mighty to make us holy and to make us happy—a religion that is not meat, nor drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Seek to show your missionary spirit by diffusing this faith; and leave not the sisters of charity, so active in our streets, or the long-robed priest of the Oratory, so busy in every place into which they can gain admission, to eclipse or excel you in ministering to the wants of your fellow men, and in spreading this blessed Gospel among those who are ignorant of it. The great defence against Puseyism and Popery is—living religion. Be Christians, and Rome will feel it. Be orthodox in head, but cold and unsanctified in heart and inactive in life, and Rome

will not only rejoice, but gain. Let us bless God that we know this,—that however that dark system may spread for a little, its mightiest triumphs are the precursors of its greatest downfall. God's judgments on Rome have already begun—Babylon is now drinking of the cup of the indignation of God; and all her boasted triumphs are but the instalments, as it were, or foretokens of her speedy downfall. She is only gathering together all her forces, till the earth shall explode from beneath, and the heavens rain floods of fire from above, and great Babylon shall perish like a ship foundering at sea. We rejoice not at the sufferings of any: but yet we cannot but join with saints that are in heaven and angels that are round the throne in giving glory to God that the great waster of the earth is about to be removed; and that the Jews, his ancient heritage, have heard his voice and are soon to come back; and that the fulness of the Gentiles has nearly arrived, and “the kingdoms of this world are soon to become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Amen.

LECTURE XVII.

THE COMING KINGDOM.

“*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire . . . And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed . . . Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom . . . But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*”—DANIEL vii. 9, 14, 22, 26, 27.

THE first fact that is here worthy of notice is the consumption, or the wasting away, of that power which is called the “little horn.” I have identified this power with the Papacy, by, I think, irresistible evidence. There is here a clear intimation, that in the first instance it shall be gradually wasted or consumed till it is all but exhausted by the wasting influence of a power without it; and next, that after it has undergone a series of successive wastings or consumptions, it shall then be utterly and signally destroyed, and its body

given to the devouring flame. In this description of Daniel, one cannot but notice the basis of the predictions of St. Paul respecting the man of sin, and so far the evidence of his acquaintance with the book of Daniel. In 2 Thess. ii. we have a description of a power that should "sit in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God;" that power which he calls "the mystery of iniquity," which was so soon to be developed, and of which he foretels the end.

"Then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth:" that is the first stage; and then utterly "destroy with the brightness of his coming." You have thus the very events predicted by St. Paul, clearly indicated by Daniel long before. Both prophets drew from a common fountain. Daniel states that "the judgment shall sit," that they shall take away the dominion of the little horn, to consume it, and then to "destroy it unto the end." St. Paul on this subject utters predictions which are completely the echo of the prophecy of Daniel; not that the one transcribed the predictions of the other, but that both were inspired by the same Spirit, foresaw the rise of the same dread and destructive superstition, and predicted, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, first its gradual decay—a decay that is now obvious in every land—and lastly its final and irretrievable destruction by the brightness of the Redeemer's coming.

We cannot but see in the next place that the utter destruction of "the false prophet" is not *prior* but *subsequent* to the appearance of the "Ancient of days," or the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see the thrones set; we see the Ancient of days arrayed in his garments, white as snow—thousands of attendant angels ministering before him; and "*after this,*" says the prophet, "I beheld *then* because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the devouring flame." And so, in verse 26, where it is explained, "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto

the end." It therefore appears to me that, first, the Lord shall come, and next, the Papacy shall be finally destroyed. I do not believe that the Church of Rome will be swept away utterly, except by Christ's immediate personal revelation. All Scripture seems to me clearly to indicate this. Her consumption, in fact, is now going on; and soon, as soon as the Lord comes, the final destruction of the system and of all that cleave to it, by what the Apostle calls, "the brightness of the Redeemer's coming," shall be signally accomplished. So we read of the stone that first smites the image upon its ten toes, or the ten kingdoms; and then the God of heaven sets up a kingdom which shall not be destroyed or be left to other people, but which shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. There is first, the revelation of the stone, *i.e.* the second coming of Christ; then there is the destruction of all hostile dominions or empires, and, among others, that of the Roman apostasy also. So here it is, after the advent, that the beast "was slain, his body destroyed, and given to the devouring flame."

Now notice how parallel this runs with the description of our Lord's advent in 2 Thess. i. 7: "To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." You see how perfectly one passage responds to the other. First of all there is to be the revelation of Christ, as the Apostle says; next, he is to "take vengeance in flaming fire on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel:" or, according to Daniel, this beast, or false prophet, or antichristian horn, is to be committed to the burning flame; or, as St. John tells us in the Apocalypse, "she," *i.e.* "the great whore," is to be burned, and "the smoke of her torment shall

ascend up for ever and ever." This identity of language, so specific in every case, cannot be accidental; it is the coincidence of men who were inspired by the same Spirit, and who proclaim the same grand events,—the destruction of the apostasy by the personal appearance of the Lord, the glorifying of all that believe and are found when he comes "looking for him the second time without sin unto salvation," and his being "admired in all them that believe," and "glorified by his saints."

Such is the blessed hope that is set before us in the Gospel. Such is the prospect that we have, that all that is hostile to the Lord of glory shall be utterly destroyed, and that the truth in all its purity shall prevail, and overflow the human family from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. It is thus that those who look for the utter destruction of Rome before Christ comes look for a vain thing. It will last till he comes. It spans the chasm between Christ's first and second advent; it will be weakened by the force of the pre-intimatory strokes of the stone cut out without hands; it will be consumed by the preaching of the Gospel; it will be exhausted by the hostility of a thousand kings who once were charmed with its grandeur, and made drunk with the cup of its intoxication; but it will only be utterly and completely destroyed and broken up by the brightness of the Redeemer's coming.

This leads me to notice those passages I have read, which announce his coming. We have in verse-9, a most sublime description: "I beheld till the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." This is plainly not the last judgment, for it precedes the destruction of antichrist; it is a judgment previous to the last, de-

scribed, as I shall show you, in other parts of Scripture. But the first question is, who is the "Ancient of days?" Some think it is a description of God the Father; but it is never to be forgotten that there is not from the commencement of the Bible to its close any portrait, even in words, of the appearance to human eye of God the Father. He is spoken of as "dwelling in light inaccessible and full of glory;" as "the God whom no man hath seen nor can see;" and there is nothing like a picture for the eye given of God the Father. Just in the same manner, there is nothing in Scripture like a portrait of the Holy Ghost. Hence nothing is to my mind more revolting than to see a dove set forth as if it were the Scriptural symbol of the Holy Spirit. I know the passage on which the idea is founded, in which it is stated that the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus "like a dove:" but every one who knows the construction of the Greek language, and will be at the trouble to consult the original, will see that it is not said that the Holy Spirit descended "*in the form of a dove;*" there is conveyed no such meaning; but that "he descended as a dove descends," *i.e.* with the fluttering, rapid movement of a dove; and for this purpose other birds might probably have been selected with equally expressive justice, in order to denote the idea intended. There is no picture of God the Father recorded in the Bible to have been seen by man; nor is there any picture or similitude of God the Holy Ghost: there is a portrait of Him who is "God manifest in the flesh," "seen of angels," "justified in the Spirit," "believed on in the world," and finally, "received up into glory." This is to be expected. If this then be so, I think the inference is just, that the Ancient of days—great as may be the difficulty on this hypothesis of reconciling this with the statement in verse 13—is none else than the Lord Jesus Christ. That I am justified in making this assertion seems to me plain from the corresponding statement in the book of Revelation, where a description, analogous if not identical, is given of our blessed Lord avowedly and by name. First, "He cometh

in the clouds, and every eye shall see him." Then says John, "I turned to see the voice which spake with me. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." Now see what Daniel says of the Ancient of days: "His garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire."

Is not the sketch given by John as it were a reflection of the sketch by Daniel? are not these substantial features of identity? and is not the inference at least highly probable, that the being described by the one is delineated by the other; and that in the picture of Daniel it was Jesus Christ in one of those frequently-occurring anthropomorphic manifestations of himself prior to his incarnation? If so, how clear the assertion of his deity as the Ancient of Days with a garment white as snow, and before whom thousands and tens of thousands stood and ministered!

Another reason why I conclude that this is not a representation of God the Father, is the following:—The Father is never spoken of as coming to judge the world: "He has committed all judgment unto the Son." We must appear, not "before the judgment-seat" of God the Father, but before "the judgment-seat of Christ." And every prediction in the New Testament leads us to suppose that the Lord Jesus Christ is the judge, and appointed to be so, of the living and the dead. The only difficulty in the way of this interpretation is the statement contained in ver. 13: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient

of days, and they brought him near before him." Herein is the difficulty, because the portrait of this first-mentioned personage is unquestionably that of our blessed Lord. If so, how can he be said to be "brought before the Ancient of Days?" I admit and feel the difficulty. I cannot explain it: I have not yet discovered what will be discovered,—the solution of these words: but it is plain enough that the Son of man is the portrait of the Saviour. It appears to me scarcely less plain that the other passage is a portrait of the Saviour also. The two may be portraits of the Saviour in his different aspects: one as the absolute God; the other as the incarnate Man: one as the Son of God, the Ancient of days; the other as the Son of man, born of the Virgin, crucified for us, and for our salvation. That ver. 13 gives the picture of the Saviour, is plain; for it is the foundation of all the imagery used by the apostles to denote him when he shall come to be glorified in his saints. Parallel passages, corroborative of this, are to be found in Matt. xxiv. 30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven in power and great glory." We have the same picture in Matt. xxvi. 64, where he himself says, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power," (answering to the Ancient of days,) "and coming in the clouds of heaven:" and in Rev. i. 7, we have the same picture again placed before us: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." And in Acts vii. 55, 56, we have the very same picture as seen by Stephen, when "being full of the Holy Ghost, he looked up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

We thus then see, first, the picture of Christ as the Ancient of days; next we see him coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory:—the first, his essential deity; the second, his mediatorial character; and *immediately after*, we perceive, "there was given

him his dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." I wish you to notice this fact: our Lord first descends from heaven borne upon the clouds, and appears upon the earth; next, and immediately after this manifestation of himself, the saints take possession of the kingdoms under the whole heaven. "All people, and nations, and kingdoms," it is here said, "shall serve him." Chronologically viewed, the order of proceeding is this: Christ comes first, Christ's foes are depressed and destroyed next, and the millennium is immediately established upon earth. If this event, the destruction of the antichristian apostasy, be the first thing that takes place immediately after Christ's second advent, then the inference seems to me plain, whatever may be the difficulties that beset it, that the millennium is not the dawn that ushers in Christ, but that Christ is the sun emerging from beneath the horizon, whose noon-day beams constitute that full millennial light and unshaded glory which shall overflow the whole habitable globe. It is impossible that all these descriptions should be merely figurative. It is too plainly expressed—too clearly taught in the language of the New Testament—too direct and historical in its tone and bearing, to be considered as a mere figurative delineation of a great Providential event, which leads to the destruction of the man of sin and to the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. And if there were any difficulty or mistake about it, surely it is cleared up by such a passage as that contained in Acts i. 9: "When Christ had spoken these things unto the apostles, behold," it is added, "he was taken up into heaven, and a cloud received him out of their sight." You recollect the apocalyptic picture is, "Behold, he cometh with clouds;" "then shall ye see the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." Thus when Christ ascended into heaven, after his resurrection from the dead, the phraseology employed to denote that ascension is, that "a cloud received him

out of their sight;" and then, at ver. 10, we are told, that "whilst they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He was taken up to heaven in a cloud: the prediction uttered by the angel was, that he should come exactly in the same manner; and therefore the event that Christians are to anticipate as the brightest, the holiest, and the most precious that can occur, is, the second appearance of him who left us in the cloud to plead at the Father's right hand, and who shall come again in all the pomp and grandeur of the Ancient of days, seated upon the clouds as his chariot, in form like unto the Son of man, consuming with everlasting fire the false prophets, the beast, and the apostasy; taking vengeance upon all that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel; and to be admired in the saints that have been raised from the dead, and gathered from the ranks of the living, and constituting that happy and blessed consummation when the bridegroom shall have come and the bride shall have made herself ready.

We gather then from all this, after careful comparison and analysis, that Christ shall come with the speed and brilliancy of the lightning upon the clouds of heaven, and at a moment when the world shall be asking in scorn, Where is the promise of his coming? and that lightning flame which precedes the chariot on which he comes shall penetrate every grave, until each saint that has fallen asleep in Jesus shall feel the reflux of a new life, and bone shall be joined to bone, and sinew to sinew, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. The despised and rejected of men will appear as the Ancient of days—the crucified between two thieves shall be seen coming in the glory of his Father in the clouds of heaven. What a piercing cry shall rise from the lost as they behold him whom they have pierced!—in what bitter language shall they mourn! What an exulting shout of victory and of gratulation shall roll from ten thousand times ten thou-

sand tongues, "Lo, this is our God! we have waited for him: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Immediately after this revelation of the Ancient of days, the kingdom of Christ shall be established upon earth. A kingdom is given him—an everlasting dominion—a dominion that shall not pass away. This is the same kingdom which is described in the last two chapters of the Revelations, under the emblem of the new Jerusalem that cometh down from heaven: that kingdom whose constituent elements are righteousness, and peace, and joy; whose subjects are kings, and priests, and saints: a kingdom in which present political greatness shall have no place; in which great wealth shall have no welcome; into which nothing that defileth shall enter, but only they who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The ninth verse indicates also that those saints who rise with Christ shall sit upon thrones. For the language of ver. 9 is, "I beheld until the thrones were cast down." There is but one who is to reign absolutely, the Ancient of days; then how do we explain the appearance of many "thrones?" This might be inexplicable, if we had not parallel passages to show its meaning. One of these is found in Luke xxii. 30, where we find these words: "That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." So, Matt. xix. 28: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And this identifies the description with the description of the Ancient of days in ver. 9 of this chapter. And that this is not a deduction from a solitary or an isolated passage, is plain from another description in 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . know ye not that we shall judge angels?" I next turn to Rev. xx., at the description of the very commencement of the millennium,—not after it, recollect—(and this shows that the Ancient of days, as described in ver. 9, comes before the millennium). At ver. 4 of that

chapter we have the words, "I saw thrones" with which compare the words of Daniel, "and the thrones were set,"—"and they sat upon them." Who sat upon them? Those that were raised and reigned with Christ a thousand years;—"and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead," *i.e.* the unconverted, the unregenerated dead, those that had the mark of the beast upon their foreheads and had worshipped the beast—"lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

Now, put all these passages together, study them at your leisure, and they will prove, I think, irresistibly, that ver. 9 of this chapter of Daniel, which describes the Ancient of days as coming in the clouds of heaven to judge the world and to receive a dominion and a kingdom, is a delineation of the Lord Jesus Christ coming prior to the millennial reign; and the saints who are raised from the dead and gathered from the living who are found alive at that day, shall, as a mark of the esteem and affection of their Lord, be placed on thrones beside the Saviour himself, and concur with him in the judgment of all flesh. There is nothing strange or unreasonable in supposing that Christians will thus become the assessors of Christ; that they will express an Amen to his judgment, and sympathise with him in all his just and righteous decisions, then and there seen and felt to be so.

In the next place, we read that the character of those who shall occupy this kingdom will be "saints;" but that their worldly aspect is to be "kingdoms, and languages, and people." This shows us that after the Ancient of days has come—after the thrones have been set—after the Son of man has been revealed in the clouds of heaven,—all nations, people, and languages existing in all their diversity, and with all their distinctions, but

individually and morally saints, though circumstantially nations, shall constitute that empire of peace and joy, over which he shall reign in glory and in beauty. If this be so, nations will exist in the millennial reign. Perhaps all the distinctions that separate nation from nation shall be perpetuated then; but, whilst they have different colours and complexions then as now—whilst they speak different tongues as they do now,—they shall have one grand characteristic in common, they shall be the saints of God, the sons of the Most High—Asia, Africa, America, and Europe, shall all be baptised by one spirit and washed in one fountain, and have in their hearts the image, the likeness, and the superscription of the Lamb. Flower will still differ from flower, star from star, country from country; there will be all variety of modes, all diversity of circumstance, but perfect unity of moral and spiritual character, united and consolidated in Christ, and gathered round him to worship and adore him as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person—the Saviour of sinners, the Lamb slain. Then Christians whose complexion is white shall be ashamed that they have ever looked with contempt on Christians whose faces are not so. Then the American Christian who would refuse to approach the Communion table in the company of the Christian black, will find that he with whom he would not partake of the symbol upon earth is a fellow-partaker with him of the substance in glory; and he shall wonder, if not grieve, that he was ever tempted to make so foolish and sinful a distinction where were the common law, the common faith, and the common Father, and one Spirit animating and sustaining the hearts of both. Then nations that warred with each other shall wonder that they did so. Then perhaps the buried dead of Waterloo shall start to their feet; the last sounds they recollected upon earth, were the roar of artillery, the roll of the victorious drum, the cries of the wounded and the dying; and the first sounds they shall hear at that day shall be the trumpet of judgment, and the songs of the saved and the curses of the lost, and the voice of Jesus, saying, "Arise, ye

dead, and come to judgment!" And how shall the French Christian marvel that he ever consented to destroy the British Christian in battle, or that man ever wielded against man any other than spiritual weapons!

Languages also shall exist in that day: for there shall be "people, and nations, and languages." The division of tongues was part of the curse; but the reversal of that curse will not be the reduction of all languages into one, but the perpetuation of all languages, each nation understanding what the other speaks. The miracle at Pentecost was not that all the Apostles spoke one language, and all that believed spoke the same language; but that each man spoke in his own tongue, and each understood what his neighbour spoke. So shall it be in the millennial day. There shall be many tongues, but one sentiment; many languages by many tongues, but each understanding perfectly the other: the many languages, like the cleffs in music, shall only constitute the more glorious harmony; there shall not be uniformity of speech, but unity of sentiment. There will not be the monotony of a single language, but the component harmony of many languages, praising one God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

Then the unity of character of all people and languages, and nations, and tongues is, that they shall all "serve and obey him." All the nations of the globe shall perpetually behold, and without ceasing magnify and praise the Lamb. Every language shall be burdened with this one song; every heart shall overflow with this all-encompassing and adoring love; every voice shall give utterance to an unceasing anthem; all shall serve him in that blessed abode where they "rest not day nor night, saying, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us, out of every language and people and tongue, kings and priests unto our God, to him be glory and dominion for ever."

We now gather from the whole of this statement, then, that truth shall eventually triumph; there is no reason to doubt that the right and the true and the holy

shall have the victory. All dominions that are hostile to Christ must give way. All kingdoms incompatible with his must be dissolved. The kingdoms of this world have their symbols in the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the fourth dreadful and terrible beast; and by a law universally proved, their passions and discord shall precipitate their own destruction; but Christ's kingdom has nothing anarchical, because it has nothing sinful in it. It has not one element of decay, because into it nothing that defileth can enter. Suns shall grow pale, stars shall become dim; the crescent shall wane, the crucifix shall fall from the hands of him that holds it: Judaism shall be cast away an exhausted formula: the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, the Academy and the Stoa, shall be forgotten, and their discussions cease. All other names shall be shaded or utterly disappear; and Christ's name shall be all, and Christ's kingdom shall extend over all the earth, and all shall bless him and be blessed in him. We see already tokens of that day. I take a bright view of the coming days. I do not believe that the man of sin shall re-assert his ancient political supremacy in this land, or that he shall be able any more to wield the destinies of the nations of the earth, or to persecute the saints of God, at least on a gigantic scale. I believe, too, that there shall be given before the time of the end auguries and instalments of the coming glory, partly the fulfilment of Joel ii. 28. What progress do knowledge, science, education, Christianity, the Bible, make everywhere throughout the world at this moment! Do we not see the whole human family drawing nearer to each other? Do we not see the two great nations, America and England, speaking a tongue that promises more and more every day to become the tongue of the whole world? Do we not see all languages, however diversified, becoming reducible to two, three, or four at the very most,—Christians becoming less earthly and Christianity less alloyed? What are these but the tokens of the approaching glory—voices in the wilderness preparing the way of the Lord—messengers sent before to announce that the bridegroom cometh? I see flowers of

paradise begin to bloom in many a desert, and afar, many a temple spire emerging into the light of rising and setting suns where pagodas were before. I can see the first rays of the Sun of righteousness beginning to penetrate the Mosque and the Alhambra, and to surprise the superstitious devotee in the midst of his devotions. The Indian begins to burn his shaster, the Arab his Koran, and the Chinaman his gods. Fewer are found in Peking to cast their infants in the streets to perish; fewer still in India to light the flames that are to consume the widow; fewer still to drag the wheels of the chariot of Juggernaut over the bodies of his prostrate devotees. I see upon all sides the sea of barbarism and superstition begin to ebb, and many a dove to take wing and fly over the length and breadth of the world's chaotic flood, giving tokens that the Prince of peace is on his way, warning us that the sound of his approach already breaks upon the ear. Let us hail the twilight: let us urge on, as far as we can, the coming day; and let us rest assured, whatever the prospects be, because God has said it, that Christ will have a kingdom and a dominion which shall not pass away—a kingdom that shall not be destroyed; and that the power and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting dominion, and all nations shall serve and obey him. Are you members of his church now, that you may be members of his church then? Are you the saints of God by grace, or the sinners of the world still by nature? Have you been translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son? Is the prospect which Daniel saw a bright one for you? When this trumpet shall sound, will it startle you with terror, or cheer your soul with joy? What the Gospel is to you now, the sound of that trumpet will be to you then. The interest that you have in the Gospel now will determine the event of which that sound will be the precursor then. My dear friends, let me ask you, in the prospect of that day, to resolve that you will be found in the number of the saints of God—that you

will be, if it be possible, the sons of the Most High—that no persecutions that are possible, no scorn that may assail, no bribes that may seduce you, no sins that may tempt you, shall prevent you from arising, and going to your Father, and saying, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight;” and he will rise and meet you; and he will say, “Bring forth the fairest robe, and put it on him, and let there be joy; for this my son was dead and is alive, was lost and is found.”

LECTURE XVIII.

THE MOSLEM.

DANIEL VIII.

You will easily perceive that it is necessary to read the whole of this chapter as the basis of a consecutive exposition. It is an historico-prophetical narrative, and must be studied as a whole. Because it is not doctrinal theology, it is not on that account to be passed over as uninstrucive. God directed it to be written for our learning; at the same time it embosoms instructive lessons, which we shall not fail to gather as we proceed.

The signs by which great truths are set forth in this chapter are in perfect accordance with what is contained and set forth in previous portions of this book. All ancient writers have set forth truth hieroglyphically, with greater or less propriety. Symbols remain when languages change, and thus become the most permanent representatives of great truths. Especially does it seem appropriate to set forth what shall take place in the latter days, still future under some of these hieroglyphic symbols. If the future had been so plainly revealed that all could read future as they see present things, men's responsibility would have been destroyed. If, on the other hand, it had been so dimly disclosed that nobody could understand it at all, there would have been little use in disclosing it at all. If some would say these prophecies are meant to be understood after they have been revealed, we ask them, why were they previously given? Do you say that it is to convince man that God's Word is truth? But the fulfilment of many stretches into the millennial glory, and we shall

need then no additional conviction that God's Word is true, for all scepticism will have passed away; and we shall see and know God, whom there will be none to deny. It is rather more dutiful in us reverently to study, and humbly to explain as we discover truth, and where we cannot see clearly, patiently to wait, aware that what we know not now we shall know hereafter.

The bear in the former division is plainly the ram in the present, as I explained to you in the course of a previous lecture. The two horns that start up on the head of the ram are, as I explained, the Medes and the Persians, constituting one great kingdom. The ram's head of gold was, as every historian will tell you, the diadem of the Persian king, this alone identifying that symbol with the personage to whom it refers; and "pushing westwards," denotes that empire subduing Lydia and Babylon by Cyrus, and Egypt by Cambyses. The he-goat is plainly explained in the chapter to be the Macedonian power; his "pushing" (as it is stated in verse 4) "westward, northward, and southward, so that no beast might stand before him," denotes his conquests, his advancing and irresistible might. The notable horn that starts up between the ears of the goat might shortly be shown to be, what it may be indisputably proved, Alexander the Great, by whom the Persian ram was destroyed, and by whose destruction immense addition was made to his own empire. This victorious progress of Alexander is matter of history; it is not matter of conjecture from prophecy, but matter of historical fact. The great horn, which typified Alexander, as we read in this passage, was broken, not gradually wasted away, not desolated inch by inch until it disappeared, but *snapt asunder*; it indicate that his sovereignty, with his life, was suddenly cut short. Everybody who knows his biography is aware that Alexander was seized with fever in the very *midst* of his victories, and died. History teaches us what the prophecy indicates by four notable horns towards the four winds of heaven, as is stated in ver. 8; it tells us

that when Alexander fell, his empire was divided among his four generals : Cassander had Greece ; Thrace, with its provinces, was given to Lysimachus ; Egypt to Ptolemy ; and the remainder of Asia was given to Seleucus. We have thus the biography of Alexander sketched by Daniel long before Alexander was born. There is no other monarch in the world to whom the description here given would apply ; there is no other people in the world's history with which the events that are here delineated can be made to coincide ; the inference, therefore, is irresistible, that history here records with its pen, what prophecy has sketched with its luminous pencil. And so man in his writings, designedly, consciously, or otherwise, witnesses to the fulfilment of the prophecies of God ; and it is in so doing that history evermore presents, if we need such additional testimony, fresh evidence that God's word is truth. God sketches the outline of the greatest general's life, and that great general comes forward at the appointed time, and sets himself, ignorant of it all the while, to fill it up. Alexander thought he was doing his own work, subserving his own ambition, adding to the splendour of an illustrious name, and to the support and extension of an almost unrivalled empire ; he thought that his own hand was working out what his own great genius planned : mistaken man ! Great things are put into a little space ; we see them by the light of God's truth. Alexander was filling up the outline that God had sketched ; he was not the directing hand, but the obedient pencil ; not the writer, but the mere pen ; he was not the originator, but the humble copyist ; and thus his glory becomes pale, his grandeur mean, while we see that God had arranged all the space that he was to cover, and determined the limits of his actions hundreds of years before Alexander stepped upon the field.

Thus one result of the study of prophecy is, to make great men feel humble, and little men, through the knowledge of God's word, feel happy.

I have already dwelt, however, on the sketch o

Alexander and his empire, as it was depicted in a previous prophecy. I proceed, in this, to show—what has been thought the more difficult part of it—what is meant by the “little horn,” *i.e.* the power, sovereignty, rule, which is here described. It has been thought difficult, because there is a description of the Romish power, under the picture of a “little horn,” in a previous chapter. But it may easily be seen that little horn is perfectly distinct from the one sketched here. The former sprung out of the fourth kingdom, and out of the fourth kingdom in its tenfold division. This horn plainly springs out of an eastern, or the Græco-Macedonian empire, and is characterised by other features, and gives birth to other and very different exploits. It must be a religious, or politico-ecclesiastical power, from its physical smallness and its moral triumphs. Let us see, then, what it refers to; and search if we can find any such body to which we can apply it. I may state, that some have supposed this little horn to be Antiochus Epiphanes, who appeared three hundred years before the birth of Christ, and signalised himself by his opposition to God, and by the dishonour which he brought upon the religion of Judea. But this seems improbable, from the following circumstances, which I submit to your consideration. The little horn was to arise out of one of the four Macedonian empires, into which the empire, or dynasty, of Alexander was split. In the second place, this kingdom was to arise at the latter end of the four kingdoms of Alexander, or Greek dynasties, as explained in verse 3. The characteristic of this little horn was to be a kingly power. The four horns are four kings; and the notable horn between the eyes another king, who was to have a fierce countenance, and was to teach dark oracular sayings. And in the next place, he was to have great success towards the east, and toward the “glory,”—this last expression denoting plainly Jerusalem: for the Apostle says—“the Jews, to whom pertained the adoption, the covenants, and *the glory.*” In the next place, the success of this little horn was to be so great, that it should cast truth, *i.e.* we suppose, Christianity, to the

ground, and spread and propagate itself by craft. It was to take away the daily sacrifice, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving; and it was to stamp upon all secular powers, "the mighty ones," and upon "the people of the holy ones." And the reason why the holy ones upon whom it was thus to stamp were thus depressed, is stated, in ver. 12, to have been "by reason of their transgression." And the punishment thus inflicted on them is stated in ver. 19 to be "at the latter end of the indignation." And this power, in the next place, was to magnify itself against "the prince of the host." And it was to last in its power exactly 2,300 prophetic days, *i.e.* 2,300 literal years. Now the first question that we have to determine, is, who were the people that were thus to be visited in consequence of their transgression, at the latter end of the indignation, and to be stamped upon and destroyed, by reason of their sin, by the great power; and this will help us more clearly to identify it. That it cannot be the Jews, I think is plain, for many reasons. From the days of Daniel to the final overthrow of the Jews, there were only two powers that desolated or destroyed them;—the first, Antiochus Epiphanes, 300 years before the birth of our Lord; and the second, the Roman. And if I show, as I will do by-and-bye, that this little horn cannot be either of these, I then show that the Jews are not the people who are here described as the holy ones and the mighty ones, but some other people, whom we are hereafter to specify. That this little horn does not denote Antiochus Epiphanes, is clear from this one circumstance, that, like all the other horns mentioned by Daniel, it must be the symbol of a continuous sovereignty, not of one solitary individual who starts into existence, and then disappears, but of a realm, or sovereignty, governed, protected, and preserved by him. But Antiochus Epiphanes was only a single individual, who appeared upon the stage and passed away. The kingdom of Antiochus never could be said, like that of this little horn, to be a gigantic empire, prospering toward the south and toward the east. In the days of Antiochus, the Jews' transgres-

sion was not full; for at that period the Jewish dynasty was almost in its meridian glory: some of its most illustrious men were then living. And, lastly, Antiochus died about 300 years after the commencement of the 2,300 years which describe the duration of the dynasty represented by the little horn. From these facts it is plain that the little horn does not describe Antiochus Epiphanes. And in the next place, it cannot refer to the Romans, for the Roman power did not increase *eastward*, so much as this is described to have done; but it increased specially westward and northward. Neither did the Roman power increase by craft; for there was very little craft in the aggressions, the victories, or the progress of Rome, but rather honesty, manliness, and open battle. And again, the Roman power was not a realm that rose out of Macedon, but from Latium. And lastly, the Roman power had no hold in Greece, until long after the destruction of Jerusalem. And if the little horn represents Rome pagan, it is utterly absurd to suppose that it can represent Rome papal at the same time. There are in prophecy two distinct symbols for Rome in its pagan, and Rome in its papal state; the one is the "iron legs," or Rome pagan, and the other is the "ten toes," iron mixed with clay, describing Rome papal; and it cannot, therefore, refer to Rome. In the Apocalypse, the seven-headed dragon is pagan Rome, and the seven-headed, ten-horned beast is papal Rome. And since Antiochus Epiphanes and the Romans were the only two powers who persecuted the Jews, and as these are not the two powers here indicated,—for it is certain that they are not, either of them, the power indicated by the little horn,—so the Jews, over whom they triumphed, are not the people indicated by those who are here described as "the holy ones," and "the transgressing people." I believe, therefore, that it denotes professing Christendom, which was visited in the last days of the Græco-Macedonian empire, by reason of the transgression of its people, as I showed you under the eighth seal, in my Apocalyptic Sketches, when describing the irruption

of the Turks and Saracens into Asia and Europe, in order to chastise "heathen Christendom" for its idolatry. Then the epithet "mighty" is totally inapplicable to the Jews. They never were a mighty people, though they might have been represented as a "holy people;" and verse 23 seems almost to identify the Gentiles; for it declares, that "in the latter times of the four kingdoms, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up." In my judgment, therefore, and in the judgment of those who have studied and written at length upon the subject of this prophecy, it is the Turkish or Mahometan power that is here represented by the little horn. I have showed you that it cannot be Antiochus, as some theologians hold; because in so many particulars the application fails in reference to him. It cannot be the Roman power, because in every particular the application fails. It must, therefore, be some other power; and the features delineated by the prophet, and the facts thrown up in the history of Mahometanism, so completely tally, that the inference is almost irresistible, that it is the Turkish or Mahometan power that is here intended.

The history of its rise and progress may be comprehended in a few sentences. It originated in Chorassin, a part of Parthia south of the Oxus, and in the very territory of the Syrian, or Græco-Macedonian empire. The birth-place of Mahometanism is, therefore, the very locality here indicated in prophecy. In that eastern territory, so clearly indicated as the place of its rise, the Turcomans, a shepherd tribe, revolted against their ruler; became independent; elected Togrul Beg as their chief, who appeared at this moment a "little horn," the petty chief of a petty but increasing clan; so that his origin, rise, and beginning, may fairly be represented, as far as his physical prominence is referred to, by the symbol of a little horn. This Togrul Beg, having thus become the chief of this petty tribe, moved first southward, at the call of the Caliph of Bagdat. He added to his victories year after year, and was at

length appointed, by reason of his success, the caliph-general of Islam. He married the caliph's daughter, and became, from a petty and contemptible chief, the royal and all but irresistible propagandist of Mahometan fanaticism. By-and-bye he conquered Judea, "the glory," or the "glorious land" that is here alluded to. He next overran Asiatic Christendom, and already he developed every feature of the character described in verse 23, as the "king of a fierce countenance," causing to understand dark sentences; mighty in his own power, but not by his own power, but by the influence of a fanatical system which he adopted, progressing and prospering wonderfully, destroying the mightiest nations and the holy people; through his policy causing craft to prosper in the land, and magnifying himself even against the Prince of princes; till, as we shall afterwards show, he was ultimately broken without hand. And to show how completely this chief, rising from a little to be a great and powerful sovereign, fulfilled, in his history, the predictions of this prophecy, I quote from the unwilling, but faithful, narrator, Gibbon, who says:—"Togrul Beg extended his jurisdiction from the Chinese frontier, *west and south*,"—almost the very language of the prophecy,—"*as far as the neighbourhood of Constantinople, the holy city, Jerusalem*,"—again using the very language of prophecy,—"*and the spicy groves of Arabia Felix*; and extended a dominion which surpassed the Asiatic reign of Cyrus and of the Caliphs." Just read the prophecy at your leisure; and recollect, as you read, the sketch I have given from Gibbon, and you will find that the prophet describes what shall be most minutely; and the historian, who had never read the prophecy, records, with equal fidelity, what has been; and Gibbon the sceptic becomes the commentator on Daniel the prophet, and presents the unconscious and the unwilling proof, that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

This prince, or horn, or power, is described as being "of a fierce countenance." It is interesting to notice,

in reading the history of Gibbon, that the expression he more than once uses to denote Mahometanism, is "fierceness," or "ferocity." For instance, this very expression occurs in the pages of Gibbon:—"The Turkish nations still breathed the fierceness of the desert;" and one of the phrases that Gibbon uses is, "he was fierce as a Turk;" the very language of the prophet being employed by the infidel and unbelieving historian.

The prophet further adds: "He waxed great to the host of heaven; cast down of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped on them;" "the daily sacrifice was taken away—magnified himself against the prince of the host,"—"cast down truth to the ground—caused craft to prosper." These features are recorded by the historian. Thus Gibbon writes: "By the choice of the sultan, Nice was preferred for his palace and his fortress; and the divinity of Christ was denied and derided in the same temple in which it had been pronounced by a general synod." The Council of Nice was held A.D. 315, and one of its great conclusions was, that the deity of Christ was a plain and obvious dogma of Holy Writ.

It is stated here of this fierce king, that "he magnified himself against the Prince of princes:" the historian states the fact, that Nice, distinguished for its unequivocal testimony to the deity of Christ, was selected by the sultan as his palace and fortress, in which they scorned and derided that great truth with the confession of which Nice is identified in ecclesiastical history. Gibbon continues: "The unity of God and the mission of Mahomet were preached in the mosques; on the hard conditions of tribute or servitude the Greek Christians might enjoy the exercise of their religion: but the most holy churches were profaned; the priests and bishops were insulted, and were compelled to suffer the triumph of the pagans, and to witness the apostasy of their brethren." Gibbon thus testifies how completely every feature I have gathered from the portrait of the prophet is embodied in the dark history and development of that fierce and powerful fanaticism which was let loose, as I showed you in my Lectures on the Apocalypse under the

figure of the irruption of Euphratean horsemen, for the express purpose of punishing idolatrous Christendom for the transgressions into which they had fallen, that is, the idolatry with which they had desecrated the worship and defiled the temple of God.

I think, then, from these points of coincidence, and from the utter impossibility of applying this picture to any other power in actual history, we are warranted in concluding that the "little horn" that rose up in the eastern empire, of fierce countenance, as described by the prophet, and recorded by the historian, "causing to understand"—for the word in the original is in this mood, "causing to understand"—dark, mysterious, and oracular sayings, that is, the teaching of the Koran, stamping upon God's people, or, as Gibbon says, "insulting the bishops and the priests," and degrading every Christian with whom they came into contact, and magnifying himself against the prince of the host; in all these coincidences we have the conclusive evidence, or, at least, the strongest possible presumption, that Gibbon, in describing the irruption of Mahometan fanaticism, with all its characteristic features, is the echo of the voice of Daniel describing the little horn springing up in the eastern empire, the fierce king punishing professing Christendom for its great transgression. The following extracts present a correct idea of Mahomet and Mahometanism:—

Gibbon describes the Koran, with its dark sentences, as an "endless incoherent rhapsody of fable and precept and declamation, which seldom excites a sentiment or an idea, which sometimes crawls in the dust, and is sometimes lost in the clouds."

Gibbon states: "In the exercise of political government Mahomet was compelled to abate the stern rigour of fanaticism, to comply with the prejudices and passions of his followers, and to employ even the vices of mankind as the instruments of their salvation. The use of fraud and perfidy, of cruelty and injustice, was often subservient to the propagation of the faith, and Mahomet commanded or approved the assassination of the

Jews and idolators who had escaped from the field of battle. By the repetition of such acts the character of Mahomet must have been gradually stained, and the influence of such pernicious habits would be poorly compensated by the practice of the personal and social virtues which are necessary to maintain the reputation of a prophet among his sectaries and friends. Of his last years ambition was the ruling passion, and a politician well suspected that he secretly smiled (the victorious impostor) at the enthusiasm of his youth and the credulity of his proselytes. In the support of truth the arts of fraud and fiction may be deemed less criminal, and he would have started at the foulness of the means, had he not been satisfied of the importance and justice of the end."

"Light and darkness," says Dr. Hales, "were not more opposite than Christ and Mahomet. It is no wonder, therefore, that a sensual and corrupt world loved darkness more than light, because their deeds were evil—more congenial to the Koran of Mahomet than to the Gospel of Christ. The pure and holy Jesus, who did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth,—who went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men by his beneficent miracles, and still more salutary doctrines,—nobly and boldly challenged his enemies to impeach his moral character if they could: 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?'—and even his betrayer and persecutors bore testimony to the 'innocent blood' of the Son of God, the righteous Son of man. On the contrary, boundless ambition and unbridled lust, cloaked under the most consummate and presumptuous hypocrisy, possessed like fiends the heart of Mahomet. He was indeed a true son of Belial. 'None but great souls can be completely wicked;' little souls want the ability to contrive and to execute splendid mischief on a great scale. Mahomet wore the mask of sanctity and mortification while he was preparing his imposture and establishing his reputation as an apostle of God and a reformer of the world. But while his mission was acknowledged, and his deluded followers became disposed to swallow the

greatest impieties and absurdities, implicitly surrendering to him all authority over their souls, their senses, and their understandings, he quickly threw off the mask and broke through all the restraints that prudence and policy had hitherto laid on his impetuous passions, and went about as a raging and roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour, and with the most matchless effrontery, and most daring impiety, he deliberately brought down pretended revelations from heaven to sanction his lies and pander to his vices."

"If ever there was a finished hypocrite, possessed of the most audacious and shameless effrontery, it surely was Mahomet, whose God was his belly, who gloried in his shame—who minded earthly things, under the garb of sanctity and religion."

"Islamism, therefore, in its whole extent, is adverse to the mild spirit and liberal genius of Christianity. It was hatched and matured in hypocrisy and falsehood. It was addressed to the appetites and passions of a sensual and corrupt people. It was distinguished by a spirit of hatred and hostility to the rest of mankind,—Christians, Jews, Pagans. It befriended arbitrary and despotic power over the souls and bodies of men. It encouraged ignorance, by representing all liberal arts and sciences as unnecessary or as prejudicial, either if not warranted by, or if contrary to, the Koran; and it produced a torpor and apathy which chilled and deadened every tendency to speculative exertion and moral improvement by the desolating doctrine of fixed fate or predestination."

Now the next question—and it will be very shortly answered—is, When did the 2,300 years, at the end of which this "little horn" was to fail, begin?—and at what period therefore may it be supposed that its prosperity closed? It is not the date of the rise but of the decay of Mahometanism that is here indicated. The two dates at one of which the 2,300 years must commence, are either the year 538 B.C., when the supremacy of the Persian and Macedonian empire began, or the year 480 B.C., just prior to the defeat of Xerxes on his invasion of Greece. The one period is the commence-

ment of the Persian dynasty, the second is the era of its meridian, or its noontide power and glory. We may prefer, for various reasons, the latter period. Take the meridian glory of Persia as its commencement; and then we shall find that the end of the 2,300 years will bring us down to A.D. 1820. Bicheno, who lived in the last century, stated in 1797 that the 2,300 years, during the last part of which the Mahometan delusion was to prosper, prevail, and stamp under-foot all that opposed it, began 480 B.C., and would terminate, as he then said, about A.D. 1820. Thirty years ago then, if this prophecy be correct, or, rather, if this application of the date here specified be the true one, the Mahometan empire began to give way. Is this matter of fact, or is it not? I might give you, at great length, evidence that it is so. For instance, it is stated in the Annual Register for the year 1820, "The Ottoman empire had reached its meridian strength, free from all foreign invasion, and in possession of perfect domestic peace." Everything in the history of Turkey, up to the spring of 1820, was powerful, peaceful, prosperous. Now just notice what begins to take place at that period. In the summer of that year Ali Pacha revolted against the dominion of the sultan, and intestine war began. In October 1820, the Greek insurrection took place; and Turkey was crippled in its strength and reduced in its territory. And from 1820, if anybody will be at the trouble to read its history, down to the present hour, plague, earthquake, fire, revolt, destruction, have not ceased continually to lay it waste, till, in the language of Lamartine, "Turkey is dying rapidly for want of Turks." Since 1820, Greece, Wallachia, Moldavia, Algiers, have been separated from the power of the Moslem dominion: and a missionary, writing recently from Constantinople, says, "Turkey is in the agony of dissolution;" and a traveller, writing on the same subject, says, "There is no law, no safety for property, in this unhappy country." It requires no prophecy to satisfy us that the Mahometan power is rapidly falling to ruin. Now is this an accidental coincidence?—Four hundred

and eighty years before Christ, when the Persian laws were supreme, and the Persian empire was in its meridian power, a "little horn" is predicted to spring up in after ages with features that identify it with the Mahometan superstition; the very period of the end of its duration is assigned, 2,300 years, from B.C. 480; and so when the end of this 2,300 years comes—not a year before or a year after—Turkey begins to hear the knell of its approaching doom, and, piecemeal, year by year, it falls to ruin; and every one who reads the present history of that country knows that every day some new revolutionary reform is taking place in its government. The paddle-wheel disturbs the silence of its waters; the European engineer is invited to Constantinople; Protestant residents are multiplying in every direction in the midst of it; the sultan is casting off the dress, the forms, the ceremonies, the habits of the Turk; it is ceasing to be a capital crime for a Turk to become a Christian. The sultan has given leave to the Jews to build a temple, if they please, in the midst of Jerusalem: and only lately, her Majesty's representative at the court of the sultan secured rights and privileges for all denominations of Christians, and for those of the ancient Armenian churches, utterly incompatible with the essential principles of the Koran,—“it dies without hand.” And what renders yet more striking all this fulfilment of prophecy is the fact, that the “little horn” was not, like that which sprung up between the eyes of the goat, to be snapped in sunder, but was to be broken without hands; or, to use the apocalyptic symbol, the great river Euphrates was to be gradually dried up. You have, in the first case, the little horn suddenly broken; but you have in this case the power or dynasty symbolised by the little horn broken without hands,—a gradual desolation and decay corresponding to the prediction so plainly denounced by Daniel.

I have stated, then, the prophecy and the plain historic fact. Let us now draw from it, for ourselves, one or two useful lessons. And the first is this, that all the otherwise inexplicable facts in the history of the church

and of the world are here plainly explained. Not one cloud has fallen upon the church that God did not foresee; not one opposing force has arisen to obstruct the march of the everlasting Gospel which prophecy has not predicted. There has occurred no unexpected dislocation—there has taken place in the history of the people of Christ no unforeseen corruption; all has come as God foresaw, and as his prophets predicted; and therefore we know that God has not because of these things forsaken his church; but rather, because these have occurred, he has shown his Providence acting in the world's history that which his Spirit inspired in the prophecy of ancient writers.

It is thus, too, that we see in the rise and origin of this system the ever active presence and power of Satan. Mahometanism came "like a dark smoke," as the Apocalypse tells us, "from the bottomless pit." Satan is its agent and its inherent might. But his limits are fixed. How delightful to know that God has fixed the bound-lines of his power, and told us in words which can never be contradicted or reversed, when, where, and how his power and his policy shall cease together. And in the next place, do we not see in the very existence of Christianity, amid all those dark and overshadowing superstitions, an evidence of the presence of God? The Gospel has been the creation and the care of the living God, or it must have been extinguished long ago. All elements have assailed it—all forms have tried to overshadow it—but it has emerged not only existing, but triumphant, from them all, and proved that it is linked with the throne, overshadowed by the presence, inspired by the truth, and protected by the power of God himself. And every one of these triumphs of the Gospel is surely a fore-augury and a fore-earnest that it will eventually triumph. A religion that has survived so much is surely not destined to perish; a book that has emerged from so many dread collisions is surely not a book that is to be ultimately destroyed. What the Gospel has done is a pledge and presentiment of what the Gospel will do. Its existence to-day is the strongest proof that it will

last while the sun and moon endure. Every prophet says so; every history indicates that it will be so, and every fact that is occurring around us—the folly of its opponents and the wisdom of its friends, speech and silence—is giving token of its rapid and approaching triumph. The crescent wanes, and the cry of the Muezzim becomes fainter—the cimeter is less appealed to, and craft is more exposed. The Hindoo is ceasing to light the fire for the consumption of the widow, and the China-woman refuses to leave her babe to perish in the streets of Pekin. The Indian objects to drag the sanguinary chariot of Juggernaut over the bleeding remains of his fellow-creatures, and the Hindoo mother no longer casts the infant that she bore into the waters of the Ganges. The altars of Paganism crumble, the lights in the temple of superstition are being extinguished one by one, and the first dawn begins to overspread the distant lands of the world, of that emerging “Sun,” which shall soon arise with “healing in his wings,” assume his noontide throne, and cover the whole earth with that glory that never shall be diminished. The Thames and the Tiber, the Danube and the Rhone, among the waters of Europe, shall soon call on the Ganges, the Euphrates and Nile in the East, and both joined by the Ohio, the Missouri, and Mississippi, the great rivers of America, in the far west, shall meet and mingle; and the praise of the Lord shall arise as the voice of many waters, and the wide world shall be covered with the knowledge of him, as the waters cover the channels of the great deep. All that God has proclaimed to be fulfilled has been fulfilled; all that God has said is to be fulfilled in the future will be fulfilled; all shall bless him and shall be blessed in him. We stand on the threshold of great and solemn events: a great epoch in which a thousand prophecies are being fulfilled is just at our doors; an era, as I have told you before, of short but terrible duration, in which old controversies shall be revived and new controversies shall be added, and all dangers meet and mingle in one dread turmoil, is just about to overtake us. There is at the present

moment a pause, but only a lull; it is not the settling down of all to quiet, it is a lull which betokens to reflecting minds the outburst of a more terrific and irresistible storm, before which all ecclesiastical and all civil bulwarks and battlements the consolidations of centuries shall bow, tremble, and break up. Some smiled at me when I told you, three or four years ago, that our Church establishments, if prophecy speaks plainly, were soon to give what has already taken place—signs of approaching dissolution. One of the representatives of the Episcopal bench tells the House of Lords that a great secession is about to take place, and proposes ecclesiastical despotism as the only resistant. Men distinguished for their earnestness and zeal, but blinded by a dread superstition, are rushing from us into that great apostasy, which has been drunk with the blood of saints, and is still bent upon their ruin. All things give token that institutions venerable for their age, valued for usefulness, Scriptural in their foundations, are about to give way, in order that there may emerge from the chaos a church more beautiful by far, whose foundations are the attributes of God, whose altar is the living Lamb, whose towers shall sparkle in the rays of rising and of setting suns throughout millennial days, and in perfect peace for ever and ever.

My dear friends, if ever there was a crisis when a man should ask himself, What am I? and Where am I to be? it is the hour in which our lot is cast. Tell me, then, not the sect to which you belong, but the side to which you cleave. Let me beg of you this day to answer, beseeching you to ask your own consciences in the sight of God, Am I a Christian, or am I not? not Am I an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, or an Independent? Any of these you may be, and not be a Christian at all. But, is my heart renewed? is my soul reformed? are my sins forgiven and blotted out? am I a new creature? do I hate what I once loved? do I now love what I once hated? do I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus? and, Do I feel it my duty to consecrate every hour that

remains to the service of that Master, who died that I might live, and rose again that I might be holy and happy for ever?

Fair-weather Christianity will not do in the time into which we are rushing. That sentimental and tasteful religion, so elegant because so indifferent, so beautiful to the natural man because so cold and statue-like, will not do. Intensity is taking possession of and rushing into everything upon earth. Infidels are becoming intensely so; pagans are becoming intensely so. Should Christians alone become more cold, more callous, more indifferent? A new life is proceeding from beneath, and taking possession of all Satan's agencies. A new life is descending from on high, and taking possession of all God's people; and pious men are beginning, more than ever, to feel now that there is nothing, comparatively, worth contending for, but the glory of Christ, the salvation of souls, the spread of evangelical religion, the supremacy of Protestant and Scriptural truth. If, then, the only rock that will stand is the Rock of ages; if the only vessel that will float securely upon the waters is that ark which God himself has prepared; make sure that your building is on that rock; be sure that you are in that vessel. Do not, my dear friends, risk eternity on a probability. And if you should not be spared to enter that chaos which is coming, but should be removed and called to the judgment-seat of God before, in either case it becomes you, and it becomes me, to ask ourselves, What will eternity be to us? No man goes blindfold to heaven. He knows, if he will look into his own conscience, and read it, whether he is going to heaven or not. It is not at all a difficult question. A man whose heart is absorbed in his counting-house, whose pleasure is the gaming-table, or the follies, the gait, and the amusements of this world; whose highest excitement is the opera or the playhouse; who has little thought about eternity, but many thoughts about what he shall eat or drink, and wherewithal he shall be clothed; gives no proof of a procession heavenward. My dear friends, I cannot dis-

guise from you the fact, if such be the type of your character, that you are marching on the broad road as plainly, as intelligibly, as if your name and your doom were written upon the broad blue firmament, and every eye could read it, and every ear could hear it.

But you, on the other hand, who "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus;" you who are resting upon the living Saviour, as your only hope; whose heart's desire and prayer is, that you may know what true life is, that you may feel what the power of real religion is; you who bring your property, your time, your talents, and your influence, and pray that God would consecrate them, and make them all subserve his holy will, and the good of your fellow-creatures; you whose only Sanctifier is the Holy Spirit, whose bright hope is the kingdom that never can be removed;—there is no doubt about your destiny. You are in the path which may be narrow, which may have many obstructions and many difficulties, but it leads you to the presence of him "in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

My dear friends, do not leave the house of prayer this night without choosing whom ye will serve. Be decided. Do not live in doubt. Do not have any more suspensive feelings about the future, or anxious thoughts about the present, but go now with bended knee, and believing heart, and vow solemnly, in the sight and hearing of the Searcher of hearts, that, as for you, for the rest of your life, you will be the Lord's.

LECTURE XIX.

FASTING.

“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”—DANIEL ix. 3.

THE whole chapter from which I have selected my text is rich with Christian petitions. I know not that there is in the Bible a sublimer litany than that which is contained in this chapter, or clauses more appropriate as channels of a Christian's prayers, than such earnest, beautiful, and yet simple ones as these—“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.” The whole chapter as we pass along will suggest precious thoughts as well as seasonable prescriptions for prayer. In this lecture I will introduce my reflections in the words which I have now read. “I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.” The whole chapter—as indeed is indicated here—is a specimen of the inner life of the prophet Daniel. He who was made illustrious for his prophetic wisdom, as is proved in previous chapters, was not the less remarkable for his earnest, his spiritual and devoted prayers: and perhaps he was so wise as a prophet, because he was so devoted as a suppliant. If he had prayed less fervently, he had perhaps been favoured with much less remarkable and interesting prophecy. It was by prayer he drew down the light which he needed for the present, and which made the future so luminous to his eyes. It was by prayer that he drew down the omnipresence of God to shelter him in the

den of lions, and to protect him in the hour of peril from the machinations of his bitter and relentless enemies. And if we are not called upon to prophesy as Daniel prophesied, because the age of prophecy has passed away, we are certainly called upon, not only here, but throughout the whole Bible, to pray as Daniel prayed, for the age of prayer still lasts. Our wants are deep, our necessities as many as his, and, blessed be the name of Him with whom we have to do, he is as ready to forgive the sins and hear the prayers of the nineteenth century as those of the six hundredth year before the birth of our Lord; for his mercy is now what it was then, unchangeable by circumstance, inexhaustible by time: "The Lord merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." As far as relates to prophecy, the sacred canon is now closed, and therefore we may not expect that we shall be gifted with the spirit of prophecy. There is a time mentioned in the Bible for everything—a time for prophecy, which ceased with Malachi, under the Old Testament, and with John in the New. There is a time to pray which shall only cease when there shall be no more wants to be supplied, and there shall only be praise for the full and perfect rest of every affection and desire. The present age is not the age of uttering prophecy, but the age of the fulfilment of prophecy. It is to me one of the most interesting studies to trace the outlines of the future as sketched in the Bible, and to watch the filling up line upon line of that outline which is taking place in the present. What is modern history? The translation of ancient prophecy; and the longer modern history records its facts, and rolls along its stream, the more clear and remarkable is the light that is cast upon ancient prophecy, reminding us that once holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and proving in the second place, that God reigns in Providence as surely as he ruled in the affairs of ancient Babylon. Every day strengthens the conviction that God has taken care that the minutest jot and tittle of all that he has predicted

shall be adequately and certainly performed. But while the age of prophecy, as far as it was inspired, has thus passed away, the age and need of prayer still lasts. It is an instinct of the human, an inspiration of the divine, a privilege Christians enjoy, a duty all men should bow to. I will take an opportunity in a subsequent discourse of enlarging upon the nature and characteristics of prayer. This evening I am anxious to call your attention to a subject on which various opinions have been, and are now entertained, and on the obligation of which various controversies have been held; namely, that which is here stated to have accompanied Daniel's prayer, "fasting, sackcloth, and ashes." There is a constant allusion throughout the whole of the Old Testament to "fasting, sackcloth, and ashes," as accompaniments of prayer. There are also frequent allusions to fasting scattered throughout the New Testament; and some are strongly convinced, that even as an evangelical duty they are bound to practice it, and believe that those who cannot see that it is obligatory upon them in this dispensation, are guilty of violating a clear and unequivocal commandment of our blessed Lord. I will glance very briefly at this interesting, and, in some degree, very practical inquiry.

In all the works that Christ, that great example, performed, I do not find that, except in one special instance, so clearly supernatural as to be placed beyond the range of any approximate imitation on our part, our blessed Lord ever fasted. The only occasion on which he is said to have fasted, was, when he was in the wilderness, during a period of forty days, led up by the Spirit to be tempted, not for the purpose of fasting, for fasting was an incident, not an end. That he felt no hunger during that fast, is abundantly plain from the observations contained in Matt. iv. 2, which records, that when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he "was afterwards an hungred;" as if he were not hungry during the forty days that he fasted, but only after the forty days had expired; words which imply, I think, without straining the passage, that the fasting

of our Lord was not the mere abstinence from food, but a complete withdrawal from the more public duties of his sublime ministry,—a season of solitary, sequestered, and isolated, or rather insulated, communion with God.

But it has been argued, from Matt. vi. 16, that our Lord expressly enjoins fasting. He says, for instance, in that passage,—“Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.” Reading this passage, a person may naturally infer that our Lord here prescribes fasting as a positive duty; but I do not think that such an inference can be legitimately deduced from it; because we find him alluding to various practices that prevailed among the Jews in his day, which are not believed by any to be obligatory on us. He merely regulated the existing practices which we know were then lawful, but have now passed away.

We have an instance of this in Matt. v. 23, where he says, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way.” There was an altar in the temple; but this temple and that altar have ceased to exist. We know that, by the very nature of the Gospel, there is but one altar, namely Jesus, who was at once the altar, the sacrifice, and the priest. Hence those prescriptions of bringing the gift to the altar, and leaving it there, and then going to be reconciled to a brother, are not to be considered as a reason for the permanent existence of an altar in every church, but the temporary correction of a fault committed under that economy which had not then wholly passed away.

It seems to me clear, that when our Lord alluded to fasting, he was not enjoining a duty permanently obligatory, but regulating and correcting the abuse of an existing practice which he found perverted among the people to whom he preached. We have another instance of the same thing in Matt. xxiii. 18: “Who-soever sweareth by the altar, it is nothing; but who-soever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.”

And again,—“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law.” He alludes to practices that then prevailed. He does not prescribe tithes as permanent obligations; but he regulates the conduct of the Jews in the then existing duties, and no more.

Our Lord's remarks on fasting are to be considered in the light of the passages I have quoted, not as the inculcation of a permanent precept obligatory upon us, but simply as a direction intended to regulate a practice which he found grossly and grievously abused. There is not any passage, throughout the whole Old Testament Scriptures (and this will startle you if you have not noticed it before), that positively and directly enforces fasting, however venerated in the feelings or prevalent in the practice of the Jews. The only passage that seems capable of this construction is Leviticus xvi. 29, where it is said, “This shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all.” But it is not the word “fast” that is used, but the words “afflict your souls,” which would seem to mean humbling the soul, drawing near to God, in the exercise of penitence, supplication, and prayer. But though it is not a divine prescription, it is yet unquestionable, that in almost every instance of fervent piety, and especially of public prayer, fasting was observed. In the case of Ahab, he humbled himself, and fasted, and praycd, in sackcloth and ashes. So in the case of Daniel before us: he fasted in sackcloth, and in weeping and with ashes. So the people of Nineveh fasted with weeping, and in sackcloth and ashes. So Jonah speaks of fasting. But it is worthy of notice, that those who quote the passages I have read, only take out of each text so much as suits them. If those texts are to be literally observed, and are obligatory at all, then there must be, first, prayer; secondly, fasting; and, thirdly, sackcloth and ashes. The advocates of the permanent obligation of literal fasting as the accompani-

ment of prayer, understanding by fasting, abstinence from food, take this one practice; but they leave out the other two, viz., the wearing of sackcloth, putting ashes on the head, or the lying on the ground.

If you insist that fasting is clearly and literally enjoined in this passage, you must allow me to insist that the wearing of sackcloth, and putting ashes on the head, are as clearly and as literally enjoined. At the same time, I hold that fasting is unquestionably referred to in Scripture, and in some respect, I believe, in its spirit, and true import, and right use, it is obligatory upon every true Christian. It does not always mean, as it has been generally considered to mean, pure abstinence from food, as I think such a passage, for instance, as Joel i. 14 clearly shows: "Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord." This cannot mean abstinence from food—this is inadmissible, because the judgment under which the people was actually suffering was famine; for it is said, "The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree languisheth; the pomegranate-tree, the palm-tree also, and the apple-tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered." And in verses 17, 18, "The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture." In short, there was a literal famine predominant throughout the land. This was the actual judgment; and if so, what would be the meaning of prescribing to a people starving for hunger, fasting or abstinence from food? This interpretation is untenable—it is obviously absurd. So in Joel ii. 12—"Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning." This he explains in verse 13: "And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."

True fasting is not a piece of mere externalism—a mere mechanical act; it is far higher, it is a fasting that the soul undergoes, not an outward abstinence which the body alone can feel. It consists not in abstaining from food, wearing of sackcloth, and sitting in ashes, but in humbling the soul, in bowing the heart, in wearing a meek, lowly, and humble spirit. This is fasting worthy of the name, this tends to a good purpose. I refer to a passage in Matt. ix. 14, which will, I think, confirm the position I have already taken: “Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees *fast* oft, but thy disciples *fast* not?” To which our Lord replies, in the next verse, Can the children of the bridechamber *mourn*, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they *fast*.” Does he not here imply that mourning and fasting are convertible terms, and that he that mourns and is truly humbled in heart fasts, in fact, though not in appearance, truly in the sight of God, though unseen by men? There is, I say again, no evidence that our blessed Lord fasted according to the rites and practices of the Jews, except on one special occasion already referred to, if indeed then, and his conduct in it is wholly inimitable by us. But to suppose that by observing forty days of abstinence from animal food, while we indulge in all the other delicacies of the season, is to imitate our blessed Lord, is a thorough and useless piece of Pharisaic formalism. “To undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free,” this is the fast that God hath chosen, and nothing but this is so near an imitation of him “who went about doing good.” In Matt. xvii. 14—21, we have another allusion to fasting, which is worth looking at, in order to enable us more clearly to judge of its true meaning: “And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples,

and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." What is meant by fasting here, to which so much importance seems to be attributed? One thing is perfectly obvious, that faith is the grace requisite in order to work the miracle, and that unbelief was the reason why they could not cast out the foul spirit. Our Lord does not say that their not fasting was the reason why they could not cast him out, or that fasting was a practice in the exercise of which they could cast him out; but that faith was wanted, and that unbelief was the reason of the failure. Fasting—*i.e.* insulation from the world, and prayer or earnest application to God, were and are, he indicates, the means of obtaining this faith.

But we naturally ask, in considering the meaning of fasting and its application, What is the end of fasting? Not to mortify the body, as men seem generally to consider, but to mortify, as the Bible tells us, the lusts or the deeds of the body. And it seems to me therefore that whatever may be one's predominating moral disease, fasting is the withdrawal of the evil that feeds and facilitates the progress of that disease. And so it appears to me that the fasting which our Lord enjoins as the accompaniment of prayer must be viewed in the light of the special malady for which it is adopted. And what would be fasting most appropriate in one case would just be the very reverse and most inappropriate in another case. For instance, if you find one whose besetting sin is excessive indulgence at the table—

one of the most humiliating and most discreditable of man's weaknesses—and by this I mean not the man who eats to excess at one meal, which surely is a rare thing, because an unnatural thing, but the man who dines twice, once by anticipation and once actually and truly; whose anxiety in the morning is what he shall eat and what he shall drink; who thinks much about the enjoyments of the table—not, be it observed, an uncommon thing in this age of luxury, civilisation, and social refinement, as it is called—it is that man's duty to fast in the sense of eating less, thinking less on such a subject, and being more anxious about more important and weightier things, and less so about what he shall eat and drink. In his case fasting is a duty; but it means not abstaining from food, but taking the food provided for him, thinking about it less, and about better things more.

But suppose the case of another person who is addicted to an excessive use of alcohol in any of its shapes, who parts with his senses, his reason, and responsibility, under the excessive excitement of alcoholic stimulants, what is the cure for such a person? I hope I address no individual here who is the victim of so debased and brutal a habit—a habit that is even rebuked by the beasts of the field, and denounced in the most awful tones in the Word of God; for drunkards, we are told, shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. But what is the cure for such a person? I believe that of human and mechanical means there is no other remedy than total abstinence. And why? Because he at least cannot control his use of alcoholic stimulants. But if A uses wine as a refreshment or as necessary to him, and uses it without in the least passing the bounds of moderation, it would not be right to say to A, "You shall abstain totally from the use of it, because B cannot touch it without being intoxicated." But you should say to A, "Continue in the legitimate and proper use of what God has not forbidden, and what science has proved to be occasionally useful;" and we should say to B, who cannot touch it without indulging to excess, "It is your

duty at once totally to abstain from it." And whenever I have met with drunkards, and spoken to them, I have always felt that total abstinence is the only right prescription in their case. They have lost their self-control, and their passion for intoxicating liquors has become, not only a moral sin, which makes them odious in the sight of God, but a physical disease, the only cure for which is total abstinence from the pernicious cause that feeds it at all hazards and on every occasion. But because this is the fasting which becomes B, who cannot touch wine without taking it to excess, it is not the fasting which is required in the case of A, who takes it in its place and for its proper use.

Let me take another instance, and you will see how truly fasting is a usage to be observed in the spirit, and not in the letter. Suppose the case of a miser, who spends his days in endeavouring only to make and amass money, and his nights in counting the gains he has accumulated in the day, or devising fresh schemes for increasing his hoard—one, in short, who is the victim of that frightful disease which is always gathering and never distributing. Suppose some one were to go to him and say, "Lent has arrived; you ought during these forty days to fast and abstain from food." The miser will tell you, "I stint myself in every meal, and every day, in order to save and to accumulate money; and therefore to tell me to fast is only to ask me to do what I have been doing continually for the last ten or twenty years." Plainly, abstinence from food is not the fasting that such a man requires; but the fasting that is proper for him is to take of his hoarded wealth and give to that poor starving widow; to take of his abundance and clothe those shivering orphans; to distribute garments to the naked, and to deal bread to the hungry. To a man like this we would say, "Such is the fast that the Lord thy God requires of thee."

Let me give another instance to show how we are to observe this custom of the prophets in the spirit, and not in the letter. Take the case of the victim of incessant and excessive excitement—one who goes to the

opera three times a-week, and to the playhouse twice; one who is a large subscriber to the circulating library of stimulating romances, the most pernicious reading in which the rational mind can indulge. That person lives in constant excitement, and becomes gradually unfitted for the ordinary and proper employments in which a Christian ought to engage. What is the fasting proper for such an individual? Not the eating less food, for she eats too little already; for the mind, being in a state of excitement, acts upon the body just as if that body were in a state of constant fever. The proper prescription for such a person is, "Give up your box at the opera—leave off going to the playhouse—withdraw your subscription from the library. Do not ask continually what is the last new novel; go and be a Sunday-school teacher; become the secretary of a clothing or benevolent society, or go out as a district visitor; engage in works of active beneficence, and your mind and body will then acquire their proper health, and you will find, not in the literal abstinence from food, which is not required, but in loosing the bands of wickedness, undoing the heavy burdens, and letting the oppressed go free, the fasting which God requires."

Such seems to me to be fasting in its spiritual and right sense, viewed especially in the light of those cases in our experience which it is intended to meet.

In watching the conduct of the apostles immediately after the ascension of our Lord, we find that on some occasions they did fast according to the ceremonial introduced by the Jews,—namely, by abstaining from food; but it is as plain that they conformed to many other Jewish practices that were not injurious to the spirit and purity of Christianity, under the rule that Paul lays down of becoming all things to all men, in order that he might win some. We find St. Paul saying in one passage, "that he was in fastings often:" from which some have argued that we also should frequently fast. But the Apostle, in the very same passage, says that he was in perils often, both by land and by sea; it cannot, however, hence be argued that we too should go

and seek our perils by sea and land. And surely, it never can be argued that we ought to imitate the Apostle in fasting, unless we imitate him in what he was compelled to undergo, the painful accompaniments which he enumerates. It appears from the context that this fasting was not what he voluntarily practised, but what he was compelled by his persecutors involuntarily to endure; it is not therefore a precedent he gives for us to follow, but a suffering which he mentions as assigned to himself.

Subsequently to the Apostle's days we find fasting or abstinence from food almost the glory, if I may so call it, of the Nicene Church; and it was specially practised by the Gnostic heretics, who believed that man's body was constitutionally the curse of his soul; and that to persecute and scourge and lacerate the body, was the only way to emancipate and elevate the loftier nature within it. And if you will be at the trouble to read the Roman Breviary, or the history of the saints that have been canonised by that Church, you will find them all notorious for scourging, lacerating, and tormenting the body with nettles, spikes, thorns, hunger, nakedness, supposing that there was something essentially and inherently sinful in the matter, and that only by its annihilation or destruction, and not by its sanctification, was man to be made holy and happy and like God. It is certainly not unworthy of being noticed on the present occasion, that those countries in which there are the most fast-days, are the very countries in which the Sabbath is least of all observed. You will find, if you read the Roman Catholic periodical press, the *Tablet* and other publications of a similar description, the most furious invectives against anything like an approach on the part of our country to hallowing the Sabbath day. And why? Because they have raised to a level with the Sabbath the ordinances and the commandments of men; and in Roman Catholic countries Good Friday is far more solemnly observed than the Sabbath-day, and saints' days are much more decorously kept than the Lord's day. This is just what we might expect. "No

man can serve two masters." If you try to serve man's tradition and God's command equally, the result will be that man's tradition will become supreme and God's commandment will become depressed, because God's word is uncongenial to the natural man, for his heart is enmity to it, whereas man's tradition ministers to the natural man, and is therefore welcome to him. Hence, wherever fast days, instituted by man, have been set up as of equal obligation with the Sabbath, ordained of God, we shall find the Sabbath-day become ultimately nothing, and the fast-day become all. So much is this the case, that in the Roman Catholic Catechism used at Rome, the third commandment in their arrangement is given as "Remember to keep holy the festivals;" "Recordati sanctificare le feste;" not a syllable being mentioned about keeping holy the Sabbath-day. It is not only practically expunged from the observance of the people, it is theoretically banished from the Catechisms of the Church; the *holiday* invented by the priest totally superseding the *holy day* instituted by God. And it is very remarkable, that in ancient times the men who fasted most—*i.e.* abstained from food, and scourged the flesh,—instead of being the most humble, were almost without exception most notorious for their violent and ungovernable tempers. To give you an instance:—In the fourth century of the Christian era, lived two divines, the history of each of whom I have read and studied,—Jerome, the great advocate of fasting and of monkery, and Vigilantius, the great opponent of both. The remains of the writings of Vigilantius are very few, and are only to be found in the volumes of his adversary, with whom he carried on a very ardent and lengthened controversy. Now, if you will read the productions of Vigilantius, the opponent of carnal fasting, you will find them full of a beautiful and quiet spirit, replete with gentleness and forbearance, ever putting the best interpretation on the conduct of his adversary, and yet firmly contending that fasting, or abstinence from food, and total retreat from society were not of divine obligation. Jerome, on the other hand,

who fasted from food to a severe extent, calls his opponent endless nicknames, makes puns of his name, and displays always the most bitter and quarrelsome spirit. So that the man who never observed a fast-day or a feast-day, but ate what was convenient for him, was of a beautiful and Christian temper; while the man that fasted, and went into the desert, and clothed himself with rags, and walked barefoot, was notorious for the most violent, unsanctified, and ungovernable temper. We learn from this, that it needs grace to sanctify the soul; and that whether you pamper or starve the body, or whether you feast or fast, you do not thereby necessarily purify the soul. Christianity presents to us something nobler and grander than prescriptions either for feasting or for fasting. "One believeth," says the Apostle, "that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs." Then mark what is his command:—"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike." Every English churchman believes that Good Friday is obligatory. If he believes it, he ought to observe it. Every Scottish churchman, on grounds, perhaps, equally strong, both being extra-scriptural, believes it is not of divine origin. Let him not observe it. One esteems one day above another. Another esteems every day alike. Where God hath not spoken, "let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind."

If men would only recollect this, members of teetotal societies would not call men who think it is lawful to taste wine, drunkards; and men who think it is proper to drink wine would not call members of teetotal societies fanatics. But each would be fully persuaded in his mind,—he that eateth eating to the Lord, and he that eateth not eating not to the Lord. For the sublime and noble character of the Gospel is this, "the

kingdom of God is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse." "He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

What good sense, what loftiness of spirit, breathes in the Gospel! The more we examine it, the more we see how worthy it is of God to give it, and how suitable and profitable it is for man to accept it. And if we had only a profounder sense of the necessity of a new heart, we should have less dispute about meat and drink, and holy-days, and feast-days, and fast-days, feeling that the kingdom of God is not an outward observance, or conventionalism of any sort, but an inner state, "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." We are justified, not by fasting, but by the righteousness of Christ alone. We are sanctified, not by the tormenting of the body, but by the renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit of God alone. Make sure that you are accepted in God's sight, by resting on the righteousness that Christ accomplished for you; and that you are sanctified in God's sight by being made meet for heaven by the Holy Spirit that is promised to you; and all the discussions that have vexed the world about meat and drink, and fast-days, and feast-days, will be crowded into very little bulk indeed. And very remarkable it is, that just in the ratio in which men lose sight of vital religion, do they become attached to, and absorbed with days, and forms, and ceremonies. There is no clearer sign of a church losing her glory, than when the tendency of her ministers is to busy themselves much about such matters. And when such a church forgets that the inner beauty is the true beauty, the beauty of holiness, and begins to increase in inferior beauty by robes borrowed from Aaron's faded wardrobe, and the flamens' heathen vestry,—trying to make a grand im-

pression in the sight of man by splendid robes and pompous rites,—she is all the while losing these inner and hidden excellences in which God delights, and which the spiritual man alone can appreciate. If you are satisfied that you are justified by the righteousness, and ransomed by the atonement of Jesus alone, you will not believe that any rite is essential to your acceptance before God. And if you are thoroughly convinced that you are renewed in your heart by the Holy Spirit alone, you will not care to discuss much whether you ought to be plunged in much water or sprinkled with a little. If you feel deeply the necessity of an inner change, by the Spirit and not by the baptism, you will find you have something better to think about than a fruitless discussion, or an idle controversy. Take a Baptist who is a spiritual man, and take an Episcopalian or a Presbyterian who is equally so, and they will agree to differ about the quantity of water to be used in baptism, because they are practically agreed about this one thing,—“Except a man be born again of water *and of the Spirit*, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

LECTURE XX.

PRAYER.

“ And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”
DANIEL ix. 3.

PRAYER was the expression of the spiritual life of Daniel. It is not unworthy of our exposition. We cannot overrate the importance of prayer, or attach to it too great excellence, short of attaching or attributing to it anything that belongs to God. There is a very beautiful definition given of it in a hymn by the Moravian poet, James Montgomery. He tells us that—

“ Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,
Unutter’d, or express’d,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

“ Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

“ Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try ;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

“ Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,
The Christian’s native air,
His watchword at the gates of death ;
He enters heaven by prayer.

“ Prayer is the contrite sinner’s voice,
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And say, ‘ Behold ! he prays.’

“ The saints in prayer appear as one
 In word, and deed, and mind,
 When with the Father and his Son
 Their fellowship they find.

“ Nor prayer is made on earth alone
 The Holy Spirit pleads ;
 And Jesus, on the eternal throne,
 For sinners intercedes.

“ O Thou, by whom we come to God,
 The life, the truth, the way,
 The path of prayer thyself hast trod ;
 Lord, teach us how to pray.”

Such is a beautiful definition of prayer, by one who seems to have known what its spirit, its aim, and object are. Life begins with prayer, and life ends with prayer. The soul enters on the currents of this world with prayer for guidance ; it enters upon the margin of the ocean of eternity with prayer also, as its parting breath. But prayer is often misconceived in all churches, and by all parties. I would, therefore, endeavour to detach from it those misconceptions which occasionally adhere to it.

First,—The end of prayer, offered in private, in the family, or in public, is not to inform God. Many persons pray as if they wished to tell God what God does not know. But, surely, no greater absurdity than this can be possibly conceived. He knows the thought that nestles in the most secret nook and cranny of the human heart, as well as the thought that is embodied in the newspapers, and trumpeted by a thousand tongues. The still small voice, and the deep cry of ten thousand—the want of an orphan, and the strong necessity of a kingdom,—are equally known to him.

Nor is prayer loud speaking, or much speaking, or any one special form whatever. The silent aspiration that struggles for egress is heard by God as clearly as the litany that is chanted in the grand procession, and enunciated by innumerable tongues. God hears the dumb desire, and sees the hidden thought ; and if we pray in

secret, when no man can see, he that seeth in secret will hear us, and reward us openly.

In the next place, prayer is not prescribed in the Scripture, or offered by a true believer, in order to work any change in God. We are not to suppose that by petitioning we can arrest his purposes, or divert his designs from the great end that he has in view, or has previously fixed. No eloquence of petition, no fervour of feeling, no perseverance at the throne of grace can alter one purpose of the Unchangeable, or change, in the least degree, the designs of him who has "no variableness, nor shadow of turning." Therefore, when we read in Scripture such language as, "I will not let thee go till thou bless me;" when we read that in consequence of prayer God "repented" of what he had done; and when we hear of God being moved by prayer,—we cannot fail to feel that all this is plainly language that describes divine things, accommodated to the imperfections and the weaknesses of human beings. I need not tell you that this idea solves and harmonizes those apparently conflicting words that are in various parts of Scripture, where God is said to repent, and to change,—where he is said to have taken a particular course, and that something has occurred which has altered it. These are the shadows on the dial of time of the incarnation, before that incarnation came; it is God then speaking and acting within the limits of humanity, God speaking in imperfect human speech in order to be comprehended by dull and imperfect human beings: and this very condescension of God is most wickedly made by the infidel to be an argument against the inspiration of the very book which God has made the record of his condescension. I have no doubt that the language of the Bible (perfect as that book is) does not fully answer to the great ideas of which it is the vehicle. Infinite ideas cannot be embodied in finite vehicles; and therefore, instead of the expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as some persons suppose, I believe that when the divine penmen selected the most expressive language in order to convey the truths of God, even that strong language breaks down

and fails beneath the magnificence and splendour of the thoughts of which it is made the vehicle. Even the Bible then, with all its glory, is but a dim and shadowy manifestation of that brightness which the unpurged human eye cannot bear to look upon in its intensity. We are not, therefore, to suppose that anything we pray for can work the least change in God; prayer is needful for us, not for God; it was instituted, not for his advantage, but for our salvation, comfort, and convenience; it is the expression of our homage, the declaration of our dependence, the cry of our necessities, a mighty instrument which he has put into our hands, the use of which he has promised to bless.

In the next place, you must not associate with prayer any idea of atonement or expiation. By the Romish Church, and those who have imbibed the spirit and imitate the ways of that church, prayer is regarded as a penance. Hence, in the Roman Catholic Catechism, you will find that one of the penances that the priest assigns to people who have confessed their sins is prayer; the priest tells them, after they have confessed, that they are to repeat so many Pater Nosters and so many Ave Marias, each and all of which are regarded and defined in their Catechisms to be expiatory. And I must say that those Protestant parents have not got rid of their ancient Popish affinities who say to a child, "You have conducted yourself very badly at church; you must go home and learn a collect;" or, "You have done very wrong; you must go and learn a psalm." My dear friends, never prescribe the sanctuary, the psalm, the Bible, prayer, as a punishment; always teach your children that each is a privilege; and if your child has acted wrongly, say, "You shall not go to church to-day;" or, "You shall not read the Bible to-day;" or, "You shall not have that spiritual privilege to-day which you always have had;" and you will then act in the true spirit of Protestant Christianity. But to teach the poor child to regard the bended knee and the uplifted heart, and the utterance "Our Father," as a punishment—to teach the poor child to regard the Psalms of David,

which are to be the bases of the songs of heaven, as a penance and a punishment, is worse than Popery; it is teaching the child lessons in its earliest moments, which will become so inveterate by habit, that they will not be eradicated even to the last day of its existence. Prayer is not an expiation, it is not a penance, it is not to be taught and impressed as such; it is, on the contrary, in every sense, a privilege. To attach to prayer anything expiatory, is to rob Christ of his prerogative, and to attribute to the ordinance the glory that belongs to the Lord of the ordinance. Always carry with you this idea—that there is no expiatory atonement anywhere in the universe but in the blood of Jesus. In tears shed like rain, in torture, endured as martyrs only endure it, there is nothing, and can be nothing expiatory; and the remark, therefore, which you will occasionally hear of some one who has been long ill, “Poor man, he has suffered enough for his sins, he has endured enough, and has made ample atonement for his sins,” is but heathen, or Romish, unscriptural, unprotestant, unspiritual language. Not only is there nothing atoning in anything man can suffer, but there is no necessity for anything atoning being in it. Does not the blood of Christ cleanse from all sin? Does not the righteousness of Christ entitle to all glory? We need no additional expiatory element on the one hand, and we need no additional perfect righteousness on the other; we are complete in Christ, our priest, our prophet, and our king.

This leads me to another remark. I meet sometimes with excellent Christian persons who say they give up all hope, believing that God does not hear them; “because,” they say, “our prayers are so mixed with wandering and sinful thoughts, and are so imperfect that we cannot pray aright.” My dear friends, that idea seems to imply a lingering notion that your prayers are expiatory, or that your prayers are a title to heaven. Why, if you could pray aright, it would imply that you could live aright, and that you needed no sacrifice, nor Saviour, nor atonement; that you are, in short, innocent and unfallen beings. It is perfectly true that you cannot

think aright, nor speak aright, nor pray aright, nor live aright; and, instead of saying, "I pray so badly that I will cease to pray," you ought to pray and pray still for the forgiveness of your prayers through the blood of Christ Jesus which cleanseth from all sins.

In the next place, when we pray, it is not only not to make any expiation, but we must not pray, to use the definition of our Lord, in order "to be seen of men." The Pharisees of old prayed in the corners of the streets; and the Romanists of recent times pray upon the pavements of cathedrals, and, in their homes, in what they call "oratories,"—places, nooks consecrated and set apart specially for this purpose. But you must never forget that there is no one spot, or hill, or dale, or street, or cathedral-pavement, or chapel-floor, anywhere, that has one particle of more essential hallowedness or holiness in the sight of God than another. It is quite right and decent to set apart places for public worship, but to suppose that a prayer will be heard on a cathedral pavement which cannot be heard on a kitchen floor, is to forget by whom and through what prayers are heard—the perfect intercession of the Son of God. Hence I regard the practice introduced into the diocese of Exeter, of having "oratories" in private dwellings, because it is said the drawing-room floor, or the dining-room floor is not fit to kneel on, and therefore it is not right to have family worship there, but in a little nook cut off from the rest and consecrated, and that there alone you must pray, as the first inroad upon that noble and precious thing, family worship. No one must submit to it; the thought, the prayer that comes from an humble heart, rises to God swifter than angels' wings can fly, and is heard by the ear of Jehovah louder than the seven thunders themselves. The only priesthood we need below is the priesthood of the affections; the only chancel that is holy is the chancel of an humble and broken heart; the only fald-stool is the bended heart, not necessarily the bowed knee, and such prayer, offered in such circumstances, God will hear. Many a man says prayers who never prays at all; and many a man rarely

says prayers who prays continually. It is not the Liturgy or Litany, however beautiful or eloquent; it is not the loud utterance, however fervent; but it is the thought that flies inaudible, like lightning, from the heart, penetrates the clouds, and conveys the creature's wants to a Creator's fulness, and draws down benedictions larger than tongue can tell or heart can conceive.

Prayer, in the next place, is not to be an excuse or apology for the neglect of duties. We must not say, "I cannot attend to the payment of my debts, because I am too much engaged in praying." You must not say, "I must give up certain duties that are plain and obvious, because I must devote a certain time to prayers that are dutiful and right." Prayer is not to be a substitute for duty, but the inspiration of duty, and the strongest incentive to its effective discharge. Prayer is to lead to pains-taking, and pains-taking is to lead to prayer. He that prays best will labour most, and he that labours in the right spirit will pray in the right spirit also.

Again, prayer is not an exercise suited to a great crisis, to be laid aside and afterwards to be used on the recurrence of another crisis. When a shipwreck has been threatened, I have seen persons begin to pray who never prayed before. In the season of pestilence, or famine, or war, or battle, or disorganisation, or revolution, many will begin to pray, and you would suppose that they were rapt saints and seraphs in such circumstances; but if the famine passes away, if the war ceases, if the pestilence is removed, and if you should say to such persons, "We prayed for the removal of these things, and they are gone; is not this an answer to our prayers?" they would laugh you to scorn for such foolery, fanaticism, and enthusiasm, showing that their prayer was the same to them as the ringing of bells is to Roman Catholics, who suppose that when there is lightning the ringing of consecrated bells will avert it, and that the muttering of Pater Nosters will keep away the judgment that God justly sends for their sins. We are to pray, my dear friends, at all times, in minute things and in mighty things—in all time of our tribula-

tion, in all time of our wealth, in the hour of death, and until our footsteps are heard in our approach to the judgment throne. We are to pray in the high-roads of public life, and in the hidden and sequestered by-paths of individual experience; we are to pray when we go out, and when we come in; little things are the hinges of great results, and he who does not pray that God would guide him in the little things has no right to expect that God will bless him in great things. A Christian feels that his daily bread has no blessing till he has asked it, that his home has no consecration till he has sought it, and that his labours can have no increase till God's blessing has rested upon them. And this reminds me to state, that every head of a family should have family prayer. If you look at this exercise in the lowest light, you must see that it brings before a whole house the idea of God; it presents before each member thoughts of eternity; and the very fact that you kneel and pray, and give utterance to your wants, teaches every one, from the menial domestic to the head of the house, to feel that there is a God, a judgment-seat, an eternity, a soul to be saved; and when you recollect how in this world we are apt to tread down and trample in the dust such solemn thoughts, you will feel how important it is that we should try to recruit, to revive, and resuscitate them as often as we can. But more than all this, when we pray as a family, we seek family blessings, and God has said that the families who do not call upon him he will not bless. Many of your present aches and ills, and domestic trials and troubles, may be to lead you to this; and when you have been brought to acknowledge God as a family, then see if the sunshine of his countenance will not lighten upon you, and the blessing that maketh rich abundantly descend on you.

I have thus shown you what prayer should not be; let me endeavour briefly, in the space that remains, to show you what it should be.

In the first place, prayer should be addressed unto God, as our Father. When we pray (and I wish all specially to notice this), we do not come before God as

criminals overwhelmed by the terrors of the wrath of a judge, but as sons,—sinful and erring sons, it may be,—asking the blessing of a Father. Recollect that the great idea of the Gospel—the idea that runs through it all, that gives its tone, its colouring to it all—is the idea of God as our Father; and every time we pray to him, we pray not as to an angry judge, but as to our Father. Do not forget this. Go to God as sons into the presence of a Father, never as criminals to deal with the wrath of a judge. The very first utterance is, *Abba, Father*; the very first inspiration of the Holy Spirit given to us is, that God hath sent forth the spirit of his son, crying in our hearts, “*Abba, Father.*” And our Lord appeals to us,—“If ye [earthly fathers, with all your faults and imperfections] know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” But while we are to pray to God as a Father, we are to pray to no creature on this side of God. Such, as I have told you, is my idea of the grandeur of man’s soul, that there is nothing that I would bring that soul into close contact with in religion short of God himself. No creature must come between me and God, not the highest angel or archangel; it is my privilege to go to my Father, and to say to him, in the spirit of adoption, “*Our Father, which art in heaven.*”

But prayer is to be offered, not only to our Father, but it is to be offered in the name and through the mediation of Christ. Christ is the way to the Father, and the Father’s way to us; his name is not a mere musical cadence to a prayer, or a customary close to a collect, but it is to be the Alpha of our prayer, and its Omega too; he is to be the substance of every prayer, the commencement and the end of every prayer; and it is because of what he has done, that we can see a channel by which our prayers shall rise to Deity, and the blessing of Deity shall descend into the heart of humanity. It is, then, in the name of Christ we must pray.

But we are also told that we are to pray in the strength and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. No man

persists long in seeking for a blessing who does not give evidence, by that persistency, that the Holy Spirit has taught him to pray for it. We all know very well that water rises to the level from which it descended ; it is so with prayer ; the prayer only that God has inspired will reach to God ; we are told, therefore, that the Spirit of God pleads and intercedes within us with groanings that cannot be uttered. What a thought is this, and what an evidence of the helplessness of man ! We need God to pray to, God to pray through, and God to pray in ; Christ pleading without us, the Spirit pleading within us. Sustained safely is the creature in the everlasting arms. How safe is that man whose God is our God ; how sure is that prayer of an answer which is placed in the golden censer of a Saviour's merits, and kindled by the presence of that Saviour's Spirit ! You may recollect, that in the ancient economy, it was not only sin to offer upon a wrong altar, but it was no less so to offer incense kindled from strange fire. Now the right altar is Christ, the true fire is the Holy Spirit ; it is his fire that kindles the cold heart,—it is his inspiration that gives eloquence to the stammering lips,—it is his presence that gives efficacy and expression to the inmost thoughts and desires of our hearts. It is thus, then, we pray to God the Father, in the name of Christ the Son, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And so praying, we are to pray for everything. We forfeited all by sin ; and if we have anything, we have it by grace. It is not a very important thought, and yet a thought that we rarely take hold off,—that there is not one blessing, not one happy pulse in the bounding heart, not one inspiration of cold air, not a glass of cold water, not a sensation of health or joy in the human frame, that are not as much the purchase of a Saviour's blood as the crown of glory that will be bestowed upon his saints. We forfeited all when we fell : and if we have aught that is good, holy, happy, beneficent, it is by grace, and by grace alone. Therefore, my dear friends, let us recognise the fountain of these things ; let us feel, that if we have no spiritual mercies yet for which we can thank God, we have so

many temporal mercies, that the man whose lips are dumb in prayer, has a heart that must be cold and obdurate indeed.

And when we pray for additional blessings—grace and glory—we are to pray for them earnestly,—that is, from the heart, sincerely, truly, under a deep consciousness that we want them. Do not express in prayer more than you feel, but pray that you may feel deeply what you want, and so pray. If a person is under deep wants, and wishes from any one that which will satisfy those wants, how simple is the language he uses. Nothing, therefore, is to my mind so offensive as very splendid language in prayer,—as very fine phrases, exquisitely-turned sentences, beautiful idioms, rich similes, and fine eloquence;—all this in prayer is like poppies in a corn-field, injurious, mischievous, bad. Whenever a person, therefore, prays earnestly, and truly, his prayer will be simple, it will be short, it will be to the purpose. Almost every prayer in the Bible is a short prayer. Long prayers and repetitions do not indicate earnestness; it is the deep simple cry of a humble, needy, destitute heart that God hears, when offered through the name and the merits of Christ Jesus. I look upon the General Confession of the Church of England as a perfect model in this respect: it is exquisitely simple, and evidently borrowed from and moulded upon the model of the Lord's Prayer. There is scarcely a word in it that is not a monosyllable: "We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done." How simple, how intelligible, how much to the purpose! and what a contrast to those splendid extemporaneous prayers we are sometimes doomed to listen to! Let us pray in spirit, and pray in truth, and we shall pray simply, and to the purpose—simple words, sublime petitions. So our Lord taught his disciples, and so he will teach us to pray.

We are to pray intensely and earnestly. I have been looking over the Bible for instances of prayer. I cannot quote them all now; but I have noticed how

earnest and intense were the petitions, not only of Daniel, but of all God's most distinguished saints. "If thou wilt not forgive their sins," said Moses, "blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book." What earnestness is that! Again, St. Paul said, "I could wish I were accursed from Christ for my brethren and my kinsmen according to the flesh." What earnestness is there! I remember a parallel case,—that of John Knox, the celebrated reformer, who has been blamed and caricatured, just as it now seems to be the fashion with respect to Calvin, of whom all sorts of falsehoods and misrepresentations are circulated. The prayer that John Knox constantly offered was, "O Lord, give me Scotland, or I shall die;"—meaning by that, "Let me see the Gospel spread in it, let Protestantism prevail in it, let Popery be cast out from it, or I shall die." I quote the prayer, to indicate the intensity of the feeling that was condensed into that great man's heart, when he prayed for such a blessing, and for a land at that time the most darkened and benighted amid all the nations of the earth. I may refer to Knox's own prayers, which are left to us, as specimens of great and beautiful sublimity of thought. I do not think, however (this is my own judgment, whether you concur with me or not, for the Bible is silent upon such subjects) that the repetition of the same words every Sunday, is always expedient. Have you not noticed, that the most exquisite song, if sung every day, begins to pall? It does seem to be the higher philosophy, and not the less Christianity, that the same thoughts should be in varied language, in this dispensation at least, lest men should be found repeating the words, like those of a beautiful song, and losing meanwhile the under-current of thought, which alone is precious and worthy.

We are to pray also for all good things; and among other good things we are to pray for temporal blessings. These, however, we are to pray for with a certain measure of reserve. The measure of our temporal blessings is, "Give us this day our daily bread;" the condition of our temporal blessings is, "Thy will be

done, as in heaven, so on earth." We are taught not to ask blessings for to-morrow, but for to-day only. If Christians lived as Christians profess to pray, how happy should we be! But alas, alas! man—poor inconstant man—is constantly fearing dangers that may happen to-morrow, and constantly praying for blessings that he may never need to-morrow; showing the inconsistency of his character, and thereby the grandeur and the truth of that petition which he has been taught: "Give us this day our daily bread." "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." When you pray for temporal blessings, God may not give you the very temporal blessing you ask, but he will give you that which will remove the want that you feel. If you ask riches, he may withhold them, because riches might be a curse to you; but God will give you contentment, which is sweeter far. When Paul felt keenly some thorn in the flesh, he prayed that it might be removed. God said he would not remove the thorn, but he would still answer the prayer by doing what was better—"My grace shall be sufficient for you." When you are on a sick-bed, and pray for health, God may not give you health; such health may lead you to sin; but he will give you grace to bear your sickness, and the inward man shall be renewed day by day. And oh! what a consolation is it to know that we can pillow our aching heads upon the bosom of him who has promised that he will supply all our wants, and do exceeding abundantly above all that we can either ask or think.

But, although we ask for temporal blessings, we are to ask specially and primarily for spiritual blessings; and let me tell you how you are to ask for them. Every promise in the Bible is meant to be, if you will allow the expression,—although coarse, it is expressive—the "raw material" of prayer. The promises are given us to be turned into prayer; and you will need no liturgy, and feel the want of no litany, if you will just open the psalms, and wherever God gives a promise, turn that promise into a prayer, and beg that God will fulfil it in

your experience. The promises come from the skies; the believer accepts them, and sends them back again in the shape of prayers; promise comes down again as performance, and prayer as a blessing; and the hearts of them that accepted the one and embodied the other rejoice with joy unutterable and full of glory. Hence, there is not one blessing that a sinner needs for eternity that you are not warranted to ask, and to ask boldly, as a son from a father, in the name of Christ Jesus. Do you need a new heart? do you need joy? do you need peace? Whatever you need, if God has promised it—that you may ask. But you say, “Is there no risk of presumption?” I answer, presumption is asking anything that God has not promised; but your asking for grace, or anything that God has promised, is not presumption. Were the Queen to command you to ask the highest dignity in the realm, it would be no humility to say, “It is too great for me to ask;” it would be the greatest humility, loyalty, and courtesy that you could show were you instantly to ask it. When a celebrated French king once showed the infidel philosopher Hume into his carriage, the latter at once leaped in, on which his majesty remarked, “That’s the most accomplished man living.” Hume showed his greatest reverence for the monarch, by doing what royalty commanded. And if we so treat the kings of this world, whose crowns are crumbling into dust, surely if the Prince of the kings of the earth say, “Seek, and ye shall find; ask, and ye shall obtain; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,” it must be the highest humility to ask the greatest blessings, and it must be the highest pride to ask anything less.

To the complaint often expressed by many Christians, “We have asked, but God has not answered,” I give this very short reply: God says he will give, but he does not say how long you must pray, or how often you must ask. When you are ill, and apply to a physician, if that physician promises you a cure, and gives you certain prescriptions, you do not run away from him and say, “All his promise is deception,” but you faithfully

take the prescription he gives you, and wait the result. It is so with God: God says he will answer you, but he bids you pray; and if you go on using the prescription, God himself has pledged his veracity that you shall have an answer exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or think. God requires of you unlimited confidence; give him that confidence, cast your care on him, wait patiently on him, and he will bring his promises to pass. But you say, your sorrow continues, and increases while you pray. The sorrow you feel, or the calamity you are the subject of, may be the medicine, not the disease. You do not want the medicine to be withdrawn, you only want the disease to be cured.

Especially is all this true of intercessory prayer. If you have a friend, a son, a daughter, a husband, a wife, a relative, who are not what they should be, and whom you wish to be what God would have them to be, continue to pray for them, and as sure as you do pray, so sure that prayer will be, sooner or later, answered. Many a prayer offered up by them that are gone is doing its work in the hearts of those who tread reverently upon their ashes. You may be gathered to the grave before the blessing you have prayed for descends upon a near and a dear one, but fall it will; God has pledged himself to it, and he will most assuredly fulfil his pledge.

But you are to pray for blessings not only upon your friends and your relatives, but even upon your foes. The way to destroy an enemy is to love him, and the way to destroy your enmity to him is to pray for him. Whenever there is any one towards whom you feel most uncomfortably, go home and pray for him, and all your uncomfortable feeling will depart. If this were so—if one were praying for another, and each for all, the world would have innumerable benefactors, men who prayed for others, the results of whose prayers many might be reaping, whilst they knew not the names even of those that uttered them. Let us pray for all men, for kings and all that are in authority, for our friends that they may be the friends of God, for our

enemies that they may be forgiven, for all flesh that they may see and taste the great salvation of our God. And as an encouragement to such prayer, let me read to you—and with it I will close—that beautiful specimen which occurs in the history of Abraham. God had resolved, we are told, to destroy Sodom. “And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then will I spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: [what humility, and yet what boldness!] Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty’s sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty’s sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten’s sake. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.” Abraham left off praying before God left off giving.

LECTURE XXI.

SIN, CONFESSION, AND ABSOLUTION.

“ And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments.”—
DANIEL ix. 4.

IN my first remarks on the chapter a portion of which I have read, I endeavoured to show what was the nature of fasting, and ashes, and sackcloth, and how far obligatory on us were these accompaniments of prayer which Daniel here presented. It is said that he “prayed with fasting, with sackcloth, and with ashes.” I showed that these were temporary ceremonies in their material form, whilst they expressed permanent feelings of the heart in the dispensation in which it is our privilege to live; that the fasting required now has rather a relation to the heart than to the body; that the sackcloth and the ashes are lowness and humility of soul, and that, where these are accompanied by faith and trust in the atonement of Jesus, there there is the spirit that presents acceptable prayer to God, and on which the blessing pledged and promised will descend. In my next discourse I endeavoured to explain the nature of prayer; its divisions, its obligations, and its general characteristics. In my remarks this evening I will call your attention to three specific topics that are touched upon in the course of the prayer which I have now read: first, sin, as the root and cause of all the miseries we suffer; next, the confession of sin, which Daniel here exhibited; and, thirdly, the forgiveness of sin by him to whom the prayer is addressed; “the Lord our God,” to whom

“belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.”

We have, first of all, then, in this chapter, the acknowledgment of sin; Daniel owning, throughout the whole passage, that whatever evils had fallen upon them, their princes, and their fathers, their rulers, and all the people of the land, were to be traced to one prolific and bitter root, and that root, sin. The word is easily uttered; but eternity itself will not be able to exhaust its terrible significance. Sin it was that

“Brought death into the world, and all our woe !”

Sin was not made by God. Wherever it came from, it came not from the creative hand of our God; it was no original portion of the creation of God; it was no part or parcel of the original furniture which garnished and beautified the earth as it came from the hand of God. It is a foul stain that has fallen upon the earth. Whence it came originally, the Bible does not tell us; and as we are unable to explain its origin and the cause of its introduction as a fact, philosophers and sceptics, who either repudiate it or explain it away, are equally unable to solve the difficulty, and say why, and wherefore, and how, sin crept into the world, and originated all the disaster and wreck and misery which confessedly flow from it. All that we know is, that God is not the author of it; and he cannot be charged in any shape or sense with the responsibility of its existence. God made man holy; he made creation happy; he pronounced them both to be “very good;” and, whatever be the source of sin, it is not of God, nor from God, nor is he, in his government, in any ranner whatever, chargeable with its existence or its consequences.

Sin, in looking at it as the source of evil, may be said, in the first place, to be wrong done to one’s own self. No man sins without suffering in the act of his sin, and suffering afterwards terrible and enduring consequences that follow that act. Never can sin, as a fact in the past, be utterly annihilated. Its dark shadow will remain suspended over your recollections to the last; your

remembrance of it will not cease till grace is swallowed up in glory. Forgiven it may be; forgotten by you, as a fact, your memory will never suffer it to be. Sin, I have said, is wrong done to one's own self. It creates terrible presentiments which you yourselves are all conscious of. There is no feeling in the human heart more rending, more insufferable for its agony, than the terrible feeling of remorse. We know not fully what it is in this world, because it is benumbed, soothed, repressed by a thousand circumstantial applications round us. But when these are occasionally withdrawn, and the conscience is left to its gnawings, I believe that we have in such remorse the first sensations of the torment of the worm that never dies, and of the fire that shall never be quenched. But I do not now refer to sin as the source of future misery; I look at it as the source of misery now: a sinner is an unhappy man,—unhappy when he sins; never is the right hand lifted up to sin unless amid the lightnings of conviction and remonstrance. Never does a man do what his conscience declares to be wrong without feeling conflict, misery, discord, which are only the dawn of that future hell where sin is left to its full sway, and its victim is consigned to all its terrible results.

Sin is wrong done, specially, I observe, to man's conscience. Man's conscience may be seared, benumbed, stupified, by the influence of sin; but it never sleeps the sleep of entire death in this world. There are times when conscience will awake, and when all the opiates of this world utterly fail to hush it. There are moments of sequestration from the world, when some mysterious light will flash upon the conscience, resplendent and vivid as the lightning, in which you read the sins you have done, and see the retribution that of necessity cleaves to them; and hard as you may try to stupify, to still, and to allay that conscience, you will not succeed. It will rise from its temporary lull, and reason audibly, till the wounded spirit can no longer bear it, "of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come." It is related in Scripture, that when Herod, who was a

Sadducee, and who, therefore, disbelieved the resurrection of the dead and the immortality of the soul, heard that Jesus was performing great miracles, instantly his conscience smote him with the recollection that he had murdered John, and that conscience, stronger than his reason, said, "It is John," and, stronger than his creed, it added, "who is risen from the dead;" and with forebodings which he could not quell, made him feel that he was come to avenge the foul murder of which he, Herod, had been guilty. So true is it that conscience is more eloquent than speech, more powerful than armies; monarchs have felt it on their thrones, and sceptics have believed in spite of their atheistical convictions.

Sin is wrong done to the affections. Every one knows, and it is well that we should know, that the moment you introduce sin into the affections of a man, in thought, in deed, or in word, that moment there follows disorder, confusion, suffering. Who knows not the fury of resentment, the corroding pain of a spirit of revenge? Who is not aware what a hardening thing is avarice wherever it is cherished and entertained? Few there are who have not learned by painful personal experience, that the introduction of sin into the circle of the affections of the heart is the introduction of a foul demon who there lords it over you, and torments you with a scorpion sceptre which you can neither get rid of nor overcome, except by the forgiving blood of the cross, and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit of God.

Sin, too—this sin of which I am speaking—is an injury done to reason. Not that the sinner does not reason: avarice calculates its gains; ambition lays its plans; sensuality arranges its prospective indulgences; dishonesty schemes and plunders most cleverly; and very bad men may be very clever men;—yet sin is wrong done to reason. That noble faculty which was made to trace and teach the footsteps of God, is degraded, debased, and made a mere mercenary calculating machine for sensuality, avarice, ambition, dishonesty, and crime. Sin is degradation and wrong done to reason.

Sin is injury done to the soul! What sickness and

pain are to the body—what loss is to the estate—what dishonour is to the name—these, and more than these—and felt more intensely than these, sin is to the soul!

Sin is wrong done to all society: it is the ceaseless epidemic that is never stayed; it is the desolating plague for which there is no earthly cure. What explains the convulsions of the earth, the lawsuits, the quarrels, the disputes, the murders, the dishonesty, by which society in some of its sections is stained? It is the contention of pride, the corroding of envy, the coldness of distrust, the exactions of selfishness, the outbreaks of passion. Sin is the fever, the disease that tears, and wears, and wastes it.

And sin, lastly, is hateful to God. It is the only thing in the whole universe that God hates. Not the sinner, but his sin does he hate. God so loved the sinner, that he gave his only begotten Son that that sinner might be saved. God so hates sin, that rather than sin should triumph, he gave the blood of incarnate Deity, and so washed it away.

And this sin, my dear friends, in one word, is *our* sin: the sin we were born in—nursed in; the sin that cleaves to all mankind; which taints our purest thoughts, which is the alloy in our holiest feelings. The sin that offends God, and is the conductor of his lightnings to the earth, is our sin. There is no man who does not feel that it is so. There is no man that will not say, "I have sinned." There is no memory that does not recollect some dark shadow that has swept over it; no conscience that has not some painful quivering in it; no biography that has not in its pages something it has done which it feels it should not have done, something it has left undone which it feels that it ought to have done; and there are few that feel not in their best moments that there is *no good* in them.

Such, then, in few words, is *sin*; and such is the relationship of sin to the reason, the affections, the heart, the conscience, society. It is the only thing that God hates; it is the only thing that makes hell. I believe hell does not consist of literal flame any more than of a literal worm. It consists of far more terrible agony than

that; the worm that never dies, is the conscience; the fire that is never quenched, is sin. Let there be a company of drunkards, thieves, ambitious men, envious, cruel, sanguinary men—let them all be east together, let all restraints and restrictions be withdrawn, and there will originate and burn there a hell of the most terrific kind; there will be passions, and no means to indulge them; thirst, and no supply for it; ambition, and no thrones to gratify it. I do not believe we have anything like an adequate appreciation of what sin is. It is lightly committed; it is lightly done; but years upon years do not exhaust it. But blessed be God, terrible as it is, there is no sin, though it be of scarlet dye and of crimson hue, that may not be washed away in that precious blood “that cleanseth from all sin.”

But, in the next place, Daniel not only admitted sin as the cause of all; but in this eloquent, because simple and earnest prayer, he freely and fully confessed it. The constant expression that he uses is, “I confessed;” “I made my confession unto the Lord;” “I said, I have sinned, and have done wickedly;” “The sins that we have sinned have brought on this great evil.”

The next feature, therefore, in this prayer which I proceed to consider is, Confession. Confession, if truly felt, is freely uttered. There are two sorts of confession: there is the confession of sin extracted by unexpected disaster, or by the foreboding of a deserved judgment; and there is the confession of sin freely and spontaneously given utterance to. When Pharaoh was under the judgments of God, he confessed his sins, but he did it as if it were an atonement; and the instant that the judgment ceased, the monarch returned to his crimes. We read also that Balaam, when the angel withstood him, with a sword drawn in his hand, confessed his error: and Judas, in an agony of remorse, and amid the sparks of that hell which his own wickedness had kindled, confessed that he had betrayed innocent blood. But such was not the confession that Daniel made; and such is not the confession to which the Christian gives expression. The Christian's confession of sin is a very

different thing. Many men confess their sins just as merchants in a storm at sea cast their goods overboard; not that they dislike their goods, but that self-preservation compels them to fling them away. Their confession is wrung and extorted from them, not by a sense of the hatefulness of sin, but from a desire—a vain one, I admit—of thereby obtaining security from the judgment of God; but a Christian sees sin, and feels sin, to be hateful. What pain is to the body, that a Christian feels sin to be to the soul; he owns that he has been guilty of it; and he pours out his confession of it, like Daniel, freely and spontaneously before God.

In the next place, where there is true confession of sin, and such confession as Daniel here made, it is full and explicit. Trace at your leisure every clause in this litany, and you will see how full, how explicit, is the confession that Daniel makes of every sin of which he had been guilty. The unconverted who confess their sins, not because they hate them and feel their burden, but because they would be rid of them in order to avoid the consequences that they apprehend, and in order to escape the judgments that they fear, make but a half confession. When they begin to confess, they say, so much was owing to circumstances; so much to things over which we had no control; so much to constitutional temperament; so much to somebody else: just as did our first parents, whose succession we have truly inherited. When Adam was questioned by God, he cast the blame on Eve: when Eve was threatened, she cast the blame on the serpent: and only when Christ was preached in Paradise, as the woman's seed who should bruise the serpent's head, did Adam and Eve kneel at the family altar, and make such confession as Daniel made, free and full, laying all the blame upon themselves, none upon God.

And, in the next place, Daniel's confession was specific. Wherever there is genuine confession, it will always be personal and specific. In public prayer, whether it be the prayer that the minister breathes as the mouth-piece of the people, or the written prayer and printed

which he reads, and prays as the mouth-piece of the people,—in either case, the confession cannot be personal and specific. It must be a general confession for all who are there present. But when you are in your closet—when you lift your hearts to God,—are there no personal, specific sins, of which you are conscious, and for which your own heart condemns you?—and “God is greater than your hearts, and knoweth all things”—those sins you ought, and, if you are Christians, you will, specially unfold and acknowledge before Him who alone, for Christ’s sake, has promised to forgive them. Thus we find the Apostle Paul, when he acknowledged his sins before others, instead of trying to explain them away, rather, if possible, exaggerated them. In Acts xxvi. 9, he says, “I truly thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death,” he says substantially, “when I could not kill them, I was wicked enough to give my voice against them; and, more than this, I banished them; and, more than this, I persecuted them even unto strange cities; and, more than this, I punished them often in every synagogue; and, worse than this, I compelled them to blaspheme.” What a dark catalogue of grievous crimes! and what an honest acknowledgment of them—specific, minute, not diluted, the responsibility not shifted, not confessing them to glory in them, or as if he did not feel their weight and their heinousness, but humbling himself, and yet, in the intimation that they were forgiven, desiring to show us that God had mercy upon him, the chiefest of all sinners, in order that he might be a pattern of all long-suffering and mercy to those that should hereafter believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only will the believer be specific in his confession of sin, but he will also confess with deep sorrow and humility. He will regret that he has sinned, not because of sin’s fruits, but because of sin itself; and one of the greatest evidences of your soul being in a state of grace,

is when you can confess to God, and ask forgiveness from God, for sins that the world knows not, but for secret sins—sins that nobody suspected you of—of thought, of affection, of feeling, of heart,—when, in short, before God you confess secret sin, and seek forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, I know not a more distinct or conclusive evidence that the Holy Spirit has changed your heart, and that you are a child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven. And yet all this deep confession of sin before God, as in the case of Daniel, is not, let it ever be recollected, the confession of a criminal in the presence of a judge, deprecating his wrath, but the confession of a son returning to a father, and prostrate at the feet of his father asking his paternal blessing and forgiveness. We do not draw near to God in Jesus Christ as criminals, deprecating his wrath and beseeching his forgiveness; but as children—it may be, prodigal children—it may be, sinful, stray, and apostate,—but yet returning children. Never did the prodigal feel what true repentance was till he was able to say, “I will arise and go to my father.” That sentence was the evidence and the expression of that filial feeling with which he confessed to him his sins; “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.” The tear in the eye must not dim your view of the countenance of your Father. The sorrow in your heart, however bitter, must not drive you from God, but draw you nearer to God. The most awful aspect of sin is its centrifugal force, when it drives the sinner from God. Sin is then about to be forgiven, when you are led to lay it before God. Judas confessed his sin, that he had betrayed innocent blood,—and he went out and hanged himself. Cain confessed his sin—“Mine iniquity is greater than I can bear;” and he ran out from the presence of God. The prodigal confessed his sin, but ran to his father’s bosom, and to the threshold of his father’s house; and he was accepted, while the two first perished in their sins, unforgiven and without hope.

This confession of sins, my dear friends, must be to God himself. No priest upon earth has a right to exact it. No Church upon earth has power to command it

to be made to any other than God. Show me one text in the Bible that indicates, however remotely, that we ought to confess our sins to a priest. "Confess your sins one to another," is the only text I ever have heard quoted in support of it. But this is mutual, or reciprocal confession; not the confession of the people to the priest, but of the people one to another. But I object to all such priestly confession, on this ground,—that sin is committed against God, and against God only; and he against whom it is committed alone can forgive it. For instance, if I were to steal, I should do two things; I should commit injury on my neighbour, and sin against God. What man does to man, man can forgive; and therefore I ask my neighbour to forgive the injury I have done him. But sin, which is in the act and rises higher, and strikes against God, that God alone can forgive; and therefore, when David said, "Against thee—*thee* only have I sinned," he did not mean by that, "Against thee chiefly have I sinned," but truly and exactly. The injury or wrong was done to Uriah: his sin was against God. And thus, then, if sin be committed against God only, for a priest to assume to forgive it, is for that priest to play the apostate, and place himself in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God. Besides, to look at it in a lower light, what man would degrade himself, fallen as man is, to kneel before a fellow-man, and disclose to him the inmost thoughts and feelings of his heart? But the secret of the upholding of that terrible tribunal at which I have only glanced, as I have passed along, is the frightful power which is comprised in it. I have often heard persons say, that they wonder that, when Roman Catholics hear the Gospel, they do not leave their Church. So should I too, did I not remember, that the moment you become a Roman Catholic you must go to the priest—tell him every fact in your biography that you think to be sin, every thought, every relationship, every connexion; the priest learns to know you, your history, your friends, your prospects, and he transmits all to the great central source where all is known. The man who

knows me as well as I know myself, is my master for life, and I am his slave. His look can awe me, his word can silence me. So that the wonder to me is, not that so few leave the Church of Rome, when once they are involved in its meshes, but that they ever leave it at all. Nothing but the grace of God can enable them so to count all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. To God, then, let us confess our sins, not to man. For "To the Lord our God," not to the priest or to the Pope, "belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him."

And this leads me, therefore, to the third thought which is suggested in Daniel's prayer,—namely, forgiveness of sin. Sin, then, may be forgiven. "To the Lord our God belong forgivenesses," multiplied acts of forgiveness for multiplied acts of sin, or, as the Psalmist says, "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared;" for, as he proclaimed himself to Moses, "forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." When God forgives sin, sin is not annihilated: a fact cannot be annihilated: a fact remains in our memories, sure as its occurrence in the world. When, therefore, God forgives sin, he does not annihilate it. As far as we can gather from the Scriptures, or from our experience, this is impossible. He forgives it, while perhaps we cannot forget it: perhaps, in heaven, the sad recollection of what we were will add to the enjoyment of what we are, and swell with richer harmony the Divine thanksgiving "unto him that loved us," so guilty, "washed us," even us, so polluted, "in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." The forgiveness of sin is the exclusive prerogative of God. I have said that sin is against God alone; and therefore God alone forgives it. For any priest to assume to forgive the sins of men, is to try to snatch a jewel which belongs to the diadem of Deity: it is the foolish attempt to clothe ourselves with a portion of his lofty attributes, and so to realise the awful fact, that he who attempts to steal a ray from the glory of God, takes a consuming

curse into his bosom. The forgiveness of sin, I say, is the inalienable prerogative of God. He only has the key that opens, and no man can shut; and—blessed be his name that it is so—he only shuts, and no man can open. Were all the voices of the dead we have injured to rise from their graves, exclaiming, “I forgive, I forgive, I forgive,” all the voices of all the dead we have injured together, never could extend forgiveness to us. That one still, small voice, sounding from the cross, or echoed unspent from the throne, “My son—my daughter,—thy sins be forgiven thee,” is the word that alone has power, the absolution that alone finds a responsive echo in the glad and grateful heart of the forgiven sinner. But when God forgives,—I notice in the next place,—he forgives only in one way; that is, through a Mediator. God’s concern for the fundamental principles of his government, is the highest concern in his Divine nature. God cannot forgive sin at the expense of his justice, his holiness, or his truth. He tells you that there is no sin that he will not forgive in one specific way; but if you ask forgiveness from the absolute God, that is, in another way, or if you ask it because you deserve it, or if you ask it in any other name, or through any other mediator, or without a mediator at all,—in short, in any way save in the name of Jesus Christ, God cannot give it.

There is but one channel, and that channel is ever accessible, and through that channel a rich flood of forgiveness will pour down, that will cleanse the darkest sin, and forgive the greatest criminal. The Jews were taught this great and interesting lesson for four thousand years. What was the end of all the teaching of the Jews? Just to rivet and work into their hearts this great truth: “Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.” Men say they wonder why God desired so many sacrifices, and appointed so many bleeding victims, among that people. It was just to teach this one lesson, which was embodied in every sacrifice, impressed in every ceremony, preached by their priests, inculcated by God himself; which, notwithstanding they forgot and

renounced again and again. This great truth, that through the blood of Christ alone there is forgiveness, is still the truth preached from so many pulpits, reiterated so often in your hearing; and yet, how little do you feel its force! how little do you act upon it as a reality! how little in your consciences are you convinced that only through the blood of the Lamb there is forgiveness for the least sin that clings to our humanity! Blessed be God that Christ suffered! Justice asked for the sufferings of a man—Christ rendered the sufferings of a God. He needed no sufferings to atone for himself. All his suffering was for us, and is accessible to us. His susceptibility of suffering was just in the ratio of his spotless purity. His was a depth of agony proportionate to the grandeur and dignity of his person; and never shall we be able to see how great were the sufferings of that suffering one, till we feel perfectly how deep is the least sin of which humanity is guilty. But now, in Christ Jesus, God is faithful in his promise to forgive us, just to his own law to forgive us; his mercy having provided to the utmost fulness the victim which his justice needed and demanded. Thus God forgives us. What a precious truth! Do we rise to an apprehension of the magnificence of this truth, that God forgives us—forgives us the moment that we ask it—delights in mercy? Glorious truth! God waits to forgive us. Glorious truth! There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. Well may the prophet exclaim, “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.”

Did you ever notice, my dear friends, that the prophet seems inspired by the Spirit of God to exhaust all the resources of human speech, in order to show us what free forgiveness is offered in the Gospel? It would be an interesting investigation for you to pursue at your leisure, to count the expressions applied in Scripture to the forgiveness of sins. It is called “the remission of sins.” God releases the prisoner kept in the prison of

condemnation by his sins. God says, in Hebrews, "I will remember their sins no more." Among the Jews there was remembrance made of sin every year; they felt that sin ever needed a fresh sacrifice, but sin forgiven in Christ is remembered no more. It is so complete, that God finds this expression only adequate to embody the extinction of it,—“I will remember their sins no more.” He calls it in another passage “not imputing to them their trespasses.” He treats our sin as a nonentity, and accepts us through Jesus Christ just as if we were innocent as to the untainted and unfallen angels about the throne. Another expression that he employs is, “covered;” just as the waters of the Red Sea covered the drowned Egyptians—just as the mighty ocean covers the pebble that is dropped into its silent bosom, so God’s mercy covers our sin. It is called again, “taking away;” just as the goat let into the wilderness bearing the sins of Israel was represented as taking them away into a land not inhabited: so Christ, as the Lamb of God, takes away the sin of the world. It is called, again, “blotting out:” “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins:” just as a writing is expunged—just as a stain is extinguished by a chemical solution. No language is more fitted to express the fulness of his forgiveness than, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” It is called, again, in another place, “casting them behind his back.” The most awful passage in Scripture is, “Thou hast set my secret sins in the light of thy countenance.” We ourselves cannot see our secret sins, because our heart is so deadened by the hardening influence of sin; for the greater a sinner is, the less he sees his sins; hence, if you heard the holiest saint in the act of confessing his sins, you would suppose he was the greatest sinner on earth; and if you heard the greatest sinner confessing his sins, you would probably imagine him the most excellent of mankind. It is when our vision is purged by the unction of the Spirit of God, that we are enabled plainly to see, that sins which in the world’s eye are microscopic, are in his eye deep as crimson, or as purple

in their colour. Our secret sins are thus set in "the light of his countenance;" but when God forgives them, "he casts them behind his back." Another passage speaks of removing them from us: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our sins from us."

He whom we have crucified, forgives us. He who is the offended one, forgives the offenders. It is a royal and entire forgiveness, not one charge is left behind, not one sin is unpardoned. He will remember our sins and our transgressions no more. It is an irrevocable forgiveness. When God forgives us, he forgives us completely and irrevocably. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. He does not repeal his acts of forgiveness. He never recalls, he never revokes them. He forgives us fully, freely, and for ever. And it is instant forgiveness. The instant that an humble heart asks for forgiveness in the name of Jesus, that instant it is forgiven: the Saviour says, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It is a cordial forgiveness. It is not a legal forgiveness; so that we are not merely lawfully forgiven, as if by justice; but it is a paternal forgiveness. If only legally forgiven by justice, we should be admitted into heaven, as forgiven culprits, and shunned as criminals returned from a penal settlement. We should be as men lawfully forgiven, and tolerated as deeply guilty. But this is not the forgiveness of the Bible. It is forgiveness in justice, and therefore it is legal; but it is also forgiveness from a Father's heart, and is therefore a cordial forgiveness. And therefore the sinner admitted into heaven is not only admitted there as lawfully forgiven, but cordially welcomed: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found." This forgiveness is an echo on earth to the absolution that is pronounced from the throne. The echo is an evidence of the original. If you are forgiven, do you recollect the day, the hour, and the place, when you bowed the knee and sought forgiveness truly, confessing your sins fully, and relying for an answer to your prayer only on the blood of the everlasting covenant? If you can say that from the very heart you sought it, and that you sought it by Jesus as the only

way, then you are indeed forgiven, and it is sin, it is misery to doubt it. Go forth at once, putting away all suspicion, and henceforth rejoice in the blessedness of him whose sins are forgiven, being confident in God, relying on the riches of his mercy in Christ; and him that thus honours him, He will abundantly honour.

LECTURE XXII.

DANIEL'S LITANY.

“ O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken and do ; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God : for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.”—
DANIEL ix. 19.

I CLOSE my remarks on the extremely precious prayer, which has been the subject of my exposition during the last three lectures. I am sure we do not greatly need any liturgy formed by man, if we have access to so beautiful a litany as this is, inspired by God. At all events, however beautiful may be the litanies of man, in true beauty they cannot excel, and in comprehensiveness they cannot exceed, the prayer which the Spirit of God breathed into the heart of Daniel, and of which this chapter is the eloquent and striking expression. How earnest—how intensely earnest,—are such petitions as these : “O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken and do ; defer not, for thine own sake ; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.” And again, how striking these words : “Thou therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, that the time, the set time, to favour her, O Lord, draw near.” At this day this is the prayer of the Jew. I can conceive no spectacle more touching than the weary-footed wanderer of Salem coming back to that city, in which was the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory, that shone upon the mercy-seat ; and beholding, with deep anguish, the barefooted monk desecrating it in one place, by a Christianity more superstitious than the Judaism of the

modern Jew, and the Moslem profaning it in another place by the personation of a cruel and sanguinary imposture; and his beloved city, which was once the joy of the whole earth, the focus of all light, and the central object of enthusiastic love, despoiled, degraded, desecrated. Yet, in its deep desecration, its long-continued degradation, God has left inextinguishable yearnings after restoration in the hearts of that striking race,—these living national phenomena, that exceed in grandeur all material phenomena,—these living witnesses of the truth of God's threats, and I believe not less so witnesses of the truth of God's promises. Nothing is more remarkable than to see the Jews crowding from all lands, now that the restoration of Zion and the rebuilding of Jerusalem draws nigh, kissing the very stones, wetting them with their tears, and praying, it may be, a prayer truly heard,—for it is possible,—shall we say it is not improbable—that the Jew who rejected Jesus of Nazareth as portrayed by John the evangelist, may unconsciously accept Jesus of Nazareth as portrayed by Isaiah the prophet, and in the name of the true Messiah, though that name is to him no music, he may lift up Daniel's prayer to Daniel's God,—in groups of grey-haired pilgrims amid the *débris* and wreck of Jerusalem, that God would arise and have mercy upon Zion, and lift the light of his countenance upon her, and hasten the advent of the set time to favour her.

In reading the whole of Daniel's prayer for Jerusalem, we cannot fail to see that it is as appropriate in the present day as it was before. I am anxious to notice certain features in it, which must strike the Christian, whether he peruse it or pray it. I have already shown in what respects fasting and sackcloth are connected with prayer. I have shown, in my next exposition, sin the thing confessed, forgiveness the blessing sought for, and confession a practice in which Daniel persevered. I now proceed to develop some of the features of this prayer; next, the time at which it was offered; and, in the third place, the answer vouchsafed to it. The first feature that strikes me, as kindling every clause with

brightness and the warmth of heavenly fire, is the intensity of the feelings and the expressions of Daniel. Clearly the prophet felt deeply, and therefore he asked so fervently. An instant token, as all are aware, of an accepted sacrifice in the elder times, was the descent of fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice. Even so the first intimation to you that your prayer will be answered, is the intensity with which you pray that prayer. When a man earnestly and intensely breathes a prayer to God, in the name of Jesus, he has in that intensity and earnestness a fore-pledge from God that he is about to answer it exceeding abundantly above all that he can either ask or think. Those eloquent prayers which are beautifully worded by some, never rise above the lips by which they are uttered; but those broken sentences, those simple petitions, when the full heart feels so deeply and prays so earnestly, when it cannot wait for unloading itself, in order to seek for fine words or beautifully-formed sentences,—these are the expressions of an inner celestial fire that burns before the Lord, and brings responses from the skies, laden with everlasting benedictions. The intensity of Daniel's prayer is one of its most striking characteristics; the incense which was used of old was already kindled in the censer, before the smoke of it rose to the dome of the temple; and in the same way, prayers, to be accepted by God, must not only be presented in the name of Jesus,—which does not mean merely mentioning that name, but feeling that only by one channel can prayer ascend to God—that only through one name can they be heard, that is, in the name of Jesus,—but prior to, and in addition to this, the prayer itself, as conceived and cherished in the heart, must be kindled from above. In the old sacrifices, there must not only be no strange altar, but also there must be no strange fire used for consuming the victims on that altar. There must be the right fire as well as the right altar. So we must not only pray in the name of Jesus, but by the inspiration and kindling of the Holy Spirit. This will explain what is meant when it is said that the Holy Spirit

within us "maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." Thus, if your petitions to the throne of grace have no intensity spontaneously arising from inward earnest feeling, created by a deep sense of your wants and a keen perception of the excellence of what you require, and these twain inspired and elevated by the Spirit of God, they will die ere they reach the mercy-seat. Let a coal, not from the grate, but from the altar, kindle them. Let the affections not be earthly, from and of the earth, but spiritual and heavenly; and such prayer so kindled and so presented, it is as certain that God will hear and answer, not only for ourselves but for others also, as that the sun rises, and stars twinkle, and streams find a pathway onward to the unsounded main. If we look at some of the expressions scattered throughout the Bible, in order to describe this peculiarity of real prayer, we shall find they all denote intensity. In one place it is described as importunity: that is, not soon going away without an answer,—unweariedly persisting in asking. God does not say, "Pray once, and I will answer you;" but he says, "Pray, and I will answer you." Pray nine times, and he may not answer; pray a hundred times, and he may not answer; but pray the hundred and first time, and he may answer. All that he has said is, that he will answer; but how long, or how often you may pray, that is not for you to know: it remains with God alone, who knows what is really best for you, and most for his glory. I do not believe, my dear friends, that we have that confidence in the success and efficacy of prayer which we ought to have. I do not mean by prayer, artificial prayer; that is, artificially worded and constructed; I do not mean reading or saying a prayer, however scriptural and beautiful; but I mean the uplifting of the heart, the breathing forth of desire, the elevation of the soul when no eye can see, and no ear can hear, but God's. "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." I doubt not that some of the most successful prayers are uttered on the stones of the Royal Exchange. Some of the most fervent prayers

may be uttered behind a counter; and the House of Lords and the House of Commons are not without men that pray, not only that they may devise right measures, but that those measures may contribute to the stability of their country and to the glory of God, and the extension of true religion. It is not the place that God examines; nor is it the words that God primarily regards; it is not the form in any sense that avails—it is the intense and ardent desire breathed from the depths of the heart into the ear of God, which God answers exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.

Shame, sorrow for sin, perfect abasement, are elements of Christian prayer. Not one merit does Daniel plead; not one good deed does he commemorate: he lays his hand upon his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, and cries, "Unclean, unclean." It is the bowed heart, not the bowed knee, that honours Jesus. It is the prostration of the soul, not the prostration of the body, that constitutes prayer. The outward man is merely for communication with man; it is the inward soul that communicates with God, and God regards it and deals with it alone. The body is not the man. What the body does is not always what the soul thinks. Man's body is often guilty of hypocrisy, but the soul never, at least in the sight of God. To man it is the same whether you bow the knee, or stand, or fall flat on the face; for all these are Scriptural attitudes of prayer; the only unscriptural practice being that which prevails very much in Scotland, when the people sit while worshipping God, and singing his praises, for which there is no precedent whatever. The form is not what God looks at; he looks how the heart beats, how the spirit feels, what the soul desires, what is the intensity of the feeling, what is the earnestness or apathy of the man; and by what the man thinks, desires, prays with his soul, God estimates what the prayer is. It is not, therefore, sprinkling ashes on the head, or clothing the body with sackcloth, which are appreciated on high. But if we see ourselves as we ought, and as Daniel saw

himself, we shall soon feel that inward and deep abasement and humility which Daniel felt, and which urged no plea save what it drew from God. It is ignorance of ourselves, and distance from God, which is the cause of that ignorance, that makes any man proud or self-righteous. The moment that a man sees God as he is, he sees in the reflected light himself, just as he himself is also: but as long as he does not know God, so long he will think himself very great and very good. In God's light we see our darkness; in God's fulness our wants; in God's majesty our insignificance; our shame in his glory; our sin in his holiness: and thus, when Job saw God, he exclaimed, "Now mine eye seeth him; therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." And when Isaiah saw the glory of God, beholding him seated upon a throne, high and lifted up, his first emotion was to cry, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." Elijah covered his face with his mantle when the glory of the Lord swept by, and the apocalyptic elders fell down and covered their faces whilst they cried, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Hosts." Pride in man is invariably associated with ignorance of God. But when we see what God is, as he is revealed in grace—pourtrayed in the Bible—unveiled all that he has done, we then see as we never saw, what we ourselves are, and how deep is the depth of our fall; and thus it comes to pass, that we shall pray under a sense of abasement, not the less intensely, but the more humbly, because our eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts.

It is worthy of notice, too, in this beautiful prayer, that all the pleas urged by Daniel are pleas drawn from God; not from anything in himself, or any excellence in his people. Thus he says, in one verse, "All Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him." "O Lord, according to thy righteousness, I beseech

thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain : because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are round about us. Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake." Every plea he presents is drawn from God; the foundation of his hopes is in Deity; our expectation, also, and our merit, are there; the good of man is inseparable from the glory of God. God cannot—reverently be it spoken—bless a man except that blessing shall reflect his own glory. To unfold himself is the great end of all God's creation, Providence, and grace; and to promote his own glory by making himself known to us, is the reason why he answers prayer and makes his people happy; and blessed be his name, his glory is best promoted when his goodness and his mercy are most realised by his people. Who does not recollect the petition of Moses, "Show me thy glory?" and the Lord's answer, "I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee?" God's goodness was pronounced by God to be his glory. And what was God's glory? Here it is: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping covenant and mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." What a blessed fact is this, that God is arrayed in richer glory when he stoops to forgive a sinner, than when he stoops to create a world! Jesus, when he said upon the cross, to the thief who hung in agony at his side, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," spoke more majestic words than when, standing on the confines of the universe, He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." We ask God to forgive us our sins, and express his love; we ask him also to manifest his justice, for he is "faithful and just;" but we may also say, "O God, glorify thy name in forgiving the sins of me a sinner."

We cannot but notice, in this prayer of Daniel, in the next place, the complete unselfishness, if I may use that

expression, that runs through the whole of it. He did not ask mercies for himself; he did not pray thus intensely, thus humbly, that he alone might have all the good, though God might have all the glory; but he implored mercies for "thy people Israel,"—"thine ancient city Jerusalem, because it was desolate." A man never prays aright who prays only for himself. That prayer is not inspired by the Spirit of God that ends with the salvation or the sanctification of self. Hence our Lord, in giving us a model of prayer, has made it impossible to pray for a blessing on ourselves without praying for a blessing on others also, as if in our very prayers our blessed Lord would make us pray as he makes us love, embracing in both our neighbour as well as ourselves. He says, "After this manner pray ye;" not, "My Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, &c., give *me* this day *my* daily bread." Such is the cry of unsanctified humanity; but, "*Our* Father . . . give *us* this day our daily bread," &c. And so Daniel here prays; and so will every true Christian pray. He will pray for his children—his relations—his congregation—his church—his country; and more comprehensively still, he will pray for all mankind. There is a petition which occurs in the Litany of the Church of England, at the conclusion of prayers for many distinct classes of people, "That it may please thee to have mercy upon all men!" which is to my mind singularly beautiful. Let us not rest in our petitions for class after class till our prayers spread in their catholicity to the very circumference of the globe, and we pray God, "that it may please him to have mercy upon all men."

In the next place we may notice, in this prayer, what runs through it no less evidently, the thorough patriotism of it. Because Daniel was a Christian, he did not cease to be a Jew; because he loved the temple of his God he did not the less love the country of his fathers; Daniel sympathised with and was ready to make every patriotic sacrifice, in order to benefit and bless his country; but he felt at the same time that it never could be prosperous as a country until its Great Restorer should have mercy

upon it, and forgive the sins of his people, and, to use the language of the prayer, cause "his face to shine upon it." Not the greatest patriots are those that make the loudest profession; not the least patriots are those who only pray because prayer is all they can present. Our armies may strike a successful blow, our legislature may pass an excellent measure, but the blessing of God, for which Christians pray, is that which will make the blow of the one permanent, and the measure of the other practical and extensively useful. And hence it has been well said—

"Our country owes
Her sunshine and her rains, her blooming springs,
And plenteous harvests, to the prayer *he makes*,
Where Enoch, like the solitary saint,
Walks forth to meditate at eventide,
And think on her who thinks not on herself."

Thus there may be patriots in cellars, whose name the newspaper does not trumpet forth; there may be men who contributed to the victory of Waterloo, or to the decisive blow of Trafalgar, and who still contribute to the loyalty of our people, the stability of our commerce, and to the riches and increasing prosperity of our agriculture, who never used a pen, or wielded a sword, or marched to victory beneath our banners, but who pray that old England's God would cause His face to shine upon England's throne, and altars, and people, and magistrates, and rulers; and they, it will be found, when this world is all laid bare, and its history made patent, contributed more than all to our national stability and social prosperity, and were the conductors of blessings from the skies to her cities. Thus the prophet prayed for his country, and thereby showed himself no less the patriot because he was the Christian.

But Daniel strikingly combined with his prayer deep research and personal labour. For you observe that he states in verse 2, "In the first year of his reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the

desolations of Jerusalem." He had therefore been a hard student, as well as a spiritually-minded and praying man. He combined, what some of our Reformers said it was so vitally important to combine,—“prayer and pains-taking.”

We too are to engage in any great Christian work, the support of our schools, for instance, or of our missions, the Bible Society, the extension of the Gospel, in the exercise of all the liberality, zeal, and fervour, which we possess, or can command, just as if all depended on what we each do; and yet we are to implore the blessing of God, with that deep sense of dependence, that consciousness of insufficiency on our part, which prompts the persuasion that God must do all, or nothing will be well done. It seems a paradox to unenlightened minds, and a contradiction to the wise of this world, but it is not so: the farmer feels justly in his matters what the Christian should feel here: he knows quite well that, unless God give sunbeams and dewdrops, and fertility to the soil, it will be no use for him to sow; and he knows just as well, that in vain God gives sunbeams and dewdrops, fresh air, and a fertile soil, unless he sows. Therefore, he does sow; and thus, what with some, in the exercise of a perverse mind, at first seems a reason why he should not sow, is with him the greatest inducement to do so, because he knows that God will send “the former and the latter rain in his season,” and that He has promised, since the deluge, “that seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

But Daniel's study was not only the study of the Bible and books, as the grand depository of truth, but it was also special study of the prophetic scriptures. He thus presents a complete reply to those Christians who say that we are not called upon, or even authorised, to study unfulfilled prophecy. Daniel did not think so; he studied predictions of the future, and found out by books that God would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem. He not only discovered that God would terminate this desolation, but he found out

the very period of time that this desolation would last; and yet if a Christian minister professes, not dogmatically to pronounce, where confessedly there are many difficulties, but to express his belief from this book and the apocalyptic records, that the time draws near—that the dispensation is in its eve—it will be told him, “You have no right to study this book, you have no right to read the apocalypse at all: you had better shut it up: let it alone, or you will get into difficulties.” Why did God give it? I ask those who say so. Why did God write it? You say it was that infidels may be afterwards converted by witnessing in history the fulfilment of prophecy: but half of that will not be fulfilled till the millennium, when there will be no infidels to be converted. This is not its only use. It is for us to study, and to try to expound it. But God Himself has said what terminates the dispute, “Blessed is he that readeth the words of the prophecy of this book;” and in my own case I may say that I have found as rich a blessing from reading and studying the Apocalypse, as in studying any other portion of the Bible. Ponder and pray over all that God has written. The Protestant’s rule of faith is not the Bible without the Apocalypse, but it is the Bible and the Apocalypse, the whole word of God. Here you have the example of Daniel studying numbers before those numbers had terminated in actual accomplishment; and what Daniel did with acceptance then, I do not see why we may not try to do, with humble prayer for the teaching of the Spirit of God, and with his blessing now.

Let us notice, in the next place, the time at which Daniel prayed. It was the time of the evening oblation. The answer came at that hour, and the presumption is that the prayer was then being offered up. But why did Daniel select this season for prayer? Because Daniel felt just what you well know,—that, dissociated from the sacrifice of Jesus, and detached from his name, no prayer can be accepted of God. This great truth is the very substance of the Gospel. Your prayers should be offered in the name of Christ; in him they should

begin, in Christ they should continue and close. By him alone is the way to rise to God. By him alone, as the way, can an answer come down from God. It matters not where you pray, if you pray in the name of Jesus. The Christian economy has abolished all the distinctions of time and place. What is decent, what is orderly, what is convenient, these, and the consideration of all these, are most right; but if you say that an oratory in your house is better for family worship than your drawing or your dining-room, because it has been consecrated by a presbyter or a bishop; or if you say that God will hear a prayer in Latin that he will not hear in Hindostance or in English, or that he will hear in a chapel what he will not hear in a private house; if these be your sentiments, you are far gone in Romanism; or, rather, your creed is more ancient than that of Romanism, it is that of Levi, a reflex to Judaism: prayers under that dispensation must have been made in one place in order to be accepted; sacrifice must then have been offered on one particular altar; but now, wheresoever, on mountain crag, in valley, on the sea, on the shore, in the dungeon, or in the palace; in cathedral, church, or chapel; in chancel or in cellar; with bowed knee, or standing, or prostrate, or with none of them—if there be prayer inspired by the Spirit of God, intensely felt, and addressed in the name of Jesus, and lifted up to our Father, there God hears, and there God will answer.

But there may have been another reason for Daniel's praying at evenings. The Psalmist says, "At morning, and at evening, and at noon will I praise thee." Evening seems the most solemn hour of the day, and so far a suitable time, for individual retrospection and communion with God. Then the noise of the world grows fainter; the air becomes still; the excitement of life has passed over; the fever of human strife is laid. Our heart can rise, in the stillness of evening, to intercourse and fellowship with God. The dews that then fall to saturate the earth should remind us that our hearts need the softening, fertilising influence of the Spirit of God.

The stars that come forth to beautify the sky, and send down their pale sheen upon us, ought to remind us of that bright and morning star, the rising of that sun that shall never set. And if there be an evening each day, forget not that there is also an evening of life, when specially we should pray; when all the tints and the lights of youth are gone, when the noontide passions of manhood are quelled, and there comes the solemnity, if I may so call it, of grey hairs, and tottering limbs, and an enfeebled body; when the curfew-bell, that announces as it were the extinction of all earthly fires, is heard in every heart; then should we pray, as Daniel prayed, that the twilight of the evening which is now falling may, in our case, mingle in the twilight of that bright day which is fast approaching, when the sun shall rise, ascend his meridian, and set no more. It was at this season that Daniel prayed. He was an aged man at this period, of about ninety years of age.

At other times too should we pray. When our communion season comes round we should pray as we approach the table of our Lord, that we may go there in a right spirit. I know not a more beautiful festival than the communion; I wish only it were of more frequent recurrence. But I do not believe that there should be at that time a special preparation, and, when it is passed by, a more thorough participation in the cares, the anxieties, and the follies of the world. Our hearts should always be ready for it. I believe in the early Church they received the Lord's Supper every time they met for public worship. I fear the infrequency of the celebration of the communion has generated a feeling, especially in the north, that there is something awful in it. I have noticed in some parts of Scotland, that on this occasion men put on their gloomiest apparel, and feel as if they were about to undergo some heavy calamity, or as if they were coming to some dread sacrifice, some awful expiation that they are about to make. I do not say that enlightened men thus feel, but I know that many regard it with such feelings. And I know that in speaking with my own countrymen about coming to the Lord's

table, many of them have received in the north in their early years such impressions of the terrible and the awful, in connexion with the Lord's Supper, as they cannot cast off in maturer and more enlightened age.

My dear friends, there is nothing awful in that communion: Jesus took all the awful to himself, and has left to us all the pleasant. He made the sacrifice; we taste the feast that succeeds the sacrifice. He took all the agony; we receive all the blessing. And if there be any festival to which we should come with glad hearts, it is to the Communion-table; our Jubilee, our congregational festival; that Easter-day when we specially commemorate the fact "the Lord is risen;" that bright and happy day when we look forward to the other truth, that He that rose and reigns will come again; that glad festival in which we sit down at the table of our blessed Lord, and thus actualise the words of the Creed, "the communion of saints." We think too of those that were here before; who are now surrounding a better table, enjoying a brighter fellowship; and we give God thanks for what he has made us, and for what he made them; and we look forward to that happy day when we shall join their loftier communion, and seat ourselves at a table that never shall be drawn. I have noticed myself, during the sixteen years I have ministered in this pulpit, that the communion-table every quarter presents a new aspect; I miss grey hairs, and venerable ones I have often beheld. I miss too once young, and bounding, and hopeful hearts that were once there also. I see new faces taking the place of old ones; and nothing so vividly reminds me within these walls that this is not our home, and that we are pilgrims and strangers, looking for a better city, than our recurring communion-table. When I say *our* communion-table, it is not mine, it is the Lord's; and if there is any one spot where I rejoice to see all true Christians, whatever be the party to which they belong, it is there. It is not the monopoly of a sect; on it is written, "Do this in remembrance of me; for as often as ye eat this bread

and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come."

While I thus show my Catholic feeling in this respect, yet at the same time I must say that I prefer our own Scottish form: it is so simple, so beautiful, that the longer I see it the more am I impressed with its simple grandeur, its severe, and, as some would call it, its stern simplicity. But it matters little whether we kneel, or sit, or stand, if it is at a table surrounded by glad and thankful hearts, who eat this bread and drink this cup because Jesus has suffered that we might suffer no more.

In the next place, I wish to observe, in closing my remarks upon this prayer of Daniel, that the answer was immediate. "Whilst I was speaking," he says, "Gabriel came and touched me." What a striking incident is this! There is a text in the Bible that seems to me expressive of a greater marvel than even the electric telegraph. You know that a question asked at one end may be answered almost instantly two hundred miles away. But there is a text that anticipates the marvel: "It shall come to pass, saith the Lord, that before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." A quicker communion with God have we than even that suggested by the wondrous electric telegraph; for God hears us while we speak, answers us before we ask, and in every case "exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think."

My impression is, that this Gabriel who was sent to Daniel was not an angel, but the Holy Spirit of God. This conclusion, to which bishop Heber came, is founded on the derivation of the word, and also upon a passage that occurs in the Gospel of Luke. The word Gabriel means simply "the power of God." Compare Luke i. 19: "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God;" and ver. 26,—"Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph;" and ver. 35,—"The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;" which if literally

translated into Hebrew, will be, "and Gabriel shall overshadow thee." It may mean therefore in this place also, the Holy Spirit of God, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us. And it seems the more likely, because it was this Gabriel who came and instructed Daniel on a subject on which the Spirit teaches; for what was the nature of his instruction? About Messiah, the Prince. And what is the great office of the Holy Spirit? "He shall take of the things of Christ, and shall show them unto you." It may, however, have been an angel, for as the Apostle teaches us, "angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." And if Gabriel was a mere angel, he was sent not to claim for himself our adoration, but to execute God's message, and to minister to Daniel. The message was made to Daniel as "Daniel greatly beloved." The acceptance of the person takes place before the answer to the prayer is given. We must first be accepted as Christians before we can pray as Christians. God accepts us first, and then our prayers, to which he sends down an answer.

LECTURE XXIII.

MESSIAH'S DEATH.

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come and destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”—DANIEL ix. 26.

I DEFER in this lecture all chronological discussion respecting the epoch which the prophecy plainly intimates. I assume the fact, which cannot be denied, because it has been irresistibly proved, that this relates to the death—I add, the sacrificial death—of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether we take the grounds of chronology, or the descriptive language of the passage, it is impossible to come to the conclusion that any other is pointed at here than the Redeemer. I assume, therefore, that this is a prophecy of Christ, as well as the statement of his death, and, by implication, the nature and direction of that death. It was his shame that he was “cut off;” it was his glory that it was “not for himself.” It was the evidence that he was man that he died; it was the demonstration that he was more than man, and so his death, very different from ours, that he died not for himself. The death of Christ is the subject of extended prophecy. Isaiah liii. is an exposition of Daniel ix. 26. That wonderful chapter of the evangelical prophet may be called the true crucifix. It describes his death, the nature of his death, the results of his death. It is expressly applied by an inspired Apostle to the death of Christ; and therefore, about its application, in a Christian’s mind, there can be no doubt whatever. When Peter says: “Who did no sin, neither

was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls,"—all this is just the echo of the language of Isaiah, and therefore evidence that Peter clearly understood the 53rd of Isaiah to refer to our blessed Lord.

Now, the important truth I am anxious to establish as the testimony of the Spirit is—the sacrificial, or the atoning nature of the death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and in order to do so, I will bring forward less the argument of man, and more the simple, but conclusive testimony of the Spirit of God.

Let me notice, however, preliminary to the introduction of the passages that clearly indicate the expiatory, or atoning, or sacrificial, or vicarious nature of the death of Christ,—for all these words have one leading idea running through them,—that in the New Testament, whether in the Gospels or in the Epistles, there is a constant reference made to the death of the Lord Jesus, and far more frequently than to his birth, his life, his example, or to his aboriginal dignity. When he speaks of himself he says: "The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him;" that is, he is about to die, as it has been predicted of him in the prophets. And he alludes again and again in the minutest particulars to this event, as the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. "A bone of him shall not be broken." "They pierced my hands and my feet." "They parted my raiment, and cast lots for my vesture." All of these are references to his death, the peculiar accompaniments of that death, and to that death as the burden of ancient prophecy, the great central point to which and about which all ancient predictions converge. The death of Jesus, so singularly painful, is represented throughout Scripture, as that of a perfectly innocent being. His own crucifiers could

prove nothing against him. A voice from heaven said, with unearthly majesty, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I have been, am, and shall be, well pleased." Judas himself said, "I have betrayed innocent blood." Pilate said, "I find no fault in him." Satan was equally unsuccessful.

If the objectors to the atonement say, "It is not reasonable that the just should die for the unjust," they might say, with still greater force, it is not reasonable, on the same grounds, that the just should die at all. Here then, is the phenomenon, the strange phenomenon—that a being, pronounced by God to be innocent, proved from the silence of his enemies, the contradictions of his accusers, and the personal and protracted experience of his friends and followers, to be an innocent being, is found to have been the greatest sufferer of the greatest agony of any that ever bore a cross, or perished from the earth.

It was a perfectly voluntary death; it was not forced upon him contrary to his will; it did not overtake him by surprise. He pointed it out as the ultimate stage of his journey; he predicted it as a fact that must of necessity be. He said of himself,—“I lay down my life; no man taketh it from me.” He chose to die, and chose to die not because he loved death, but because he loved us. It was for the joy set before him—that joy, the restoration of sinners—that he endured the cross, and despised the shame. If Christ's death be not atoning, the fact that he, the innocent, thus died voluntarily, and by choice and preference, is an inscrutable mystery, an inexplicable fact.

Again: while his death was voluntary in this respect, it was, in another respect, the result of Divine pre-determination and decree. The Father is said to have "sent" him, and to have "given" him. In the Acts of the Apostles, it is said that "he was delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God." And again: "Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered to-

gether, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." It is worthy of notice, that what God predetermined is not said to have been the teaching of Jesus, the mission of Jesus, or the example of Jesus,—but the *death* of Jesus. Unless, therefore, there be something emphatic, peculiar, distinctive in that death, we cannot understand how it should be that of an innocent being, perfectly voluntary on his part, and yet predetermined by God the Father.

Jesus was put to death, charged with the blasphemy of assuming to be God, while his enemies protested he was not God. He claimed equality with God—of this there is no doubt—and when told that he had done so, he admitted and justified the claim. Now, if those who deny the atoning nature of the death of Christ believe that he was a Divine teacher sent from God, ever speaking truth, and incapable of assuming what was not his right, they must feel that when he claimed to be God, he stated what was true, and assumed what was perfectly due to him; and that, therefore, he was God. Here, also, the mystery of his death accumulates. We have not only the strange mystery of an *innocent* being suffering death, a voluntarily-chosen death,—a death predetermined and decreed by God; but a *Divine* Being in our nature suffering that death. Must there not have been something peculiar, significant, emphatic, in the death of Jesus, such as is not in the death of the most sainted martyr that ever lived and died?

What accompanied the Saviour's death is also very peculiar; so much so as to have been the accompaniment of no other death. That awful and mysterious agony in the garden of Gethsemane; that still more mysterious cry upon the cross, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" and in the midst of that terrible forsakenness to which he gave so poignant an expression, the putting forth of the sublime power of saying to the thief upon the cross,—“To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;”—surely, surely this was not the death of an ordinary missionary, nor of even the holiest martyr.

All this stamps the death of Jesus as something unique, totally different from the death of any other recorded in the annals of the sufferers of mankind.

Then mark the other fact. Jesus suffered, as he indicated himself, what no holy martyr ever suffered. He cried, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" No Christian was ever forsaken at his death by God. Is it not God's own promise?—"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." This is promised to every believer. Never yet was a true Christian forsaken of God in the agony of death. Yet Jesus was. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Does not this indicate something in this death more than in the death of a good man setting an example of patience? Is it not a death in its nature clearly distinguished from all other deaths, and indicating an end which is not exhausted by what the Socinian, or the Unitarian, or the mere moralist, pronounces concerning Jesus?

The death of Jesus was also accompanied with miracles,—and these very remarkable ones. We are told, that from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. This never accompanied any other death. We are told, again, that "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: significant, as explained by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews, of access to the holiest of all. We are told that "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." We read, also, that "when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying [from the overwhelming demonstration nature was rendering to the significance of this death], Truly this was the Son of God."

Lastly, what is equally peculiar and distinctive, Jesus instituted a memorial, celebrated in every sanctuary, every day of the year somewhere, called the Supper of

the Lord, or the Eucharist; having a retrospective reference to the fact that he died upon the cross.

Now I ask, Why did not Jesus select his baptism to be commemorated? Why not his birth, when angels broke the silence of the night, and proclaimed peace on earth, glory to God, and goodwill among mankind? Why did he take that very fact in his history which is still the most offensive to the Jew, the most incredible to the Gentile, the greatest evidence of his humiliation, his degradation, and his shame? Why did he take that one fact in preference to the more majestic facts of his biography, to be the subject of a ceaseless memorial in every congregation throughout the world, and to the end of time? Do not, I ask, all these things indicate, nay, demonstrate, that there was in the death of Jesus that which was not in the death of Paul, Peter, or Polycarp, or Ignatius, or of sainted sufferers or devoted martyrs, from the beginning to the present hour?

Having indicated these facts, I now proceed to transfer from the pages of the New Testament the leading descriptions of the death of Christ, in order that you may have, not my reasoning, or my inferential conclusion, but God's own testimony respecting the significance, the nature, the issues, and the effects of the death of Jesus. For this purpose I have taken from the "Biblical Repository" for April, 1850, a collection of texts which strike me as extremely conclusive, in their combined bearing, on the nature of the death of Christ. I present, first of all—

HISTORICAL APPELLATIVES OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

1. Θάνατος—*Death*.

Rom. v. 10. . . . We were reconciled to God by the *death* of his Son.

1 Cor. xi. 26. . . Ye do show the Lord's *death* till he come.

Philip. ii. 8. . . . And became obedient unto *death*, even the *death* of the cross.

Col. i. 21, 22. . . Yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through *death*.

- Heb. ii. 9. . . . Made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of *death*.
 ii. 9. . . . Should taste *death* for every man.
 ii. 14. . . . That through *death* he might destroy him that had the power of *death*.
 ix. 15. . . . He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of *death* for the redemption of the transgressions.

2. Ἀποθνήσκω—Die.

- Rom. v. 6. . . . In due time Christ *died* for the ungodly.
 v. 8. . . . While we were yet sinners, Christ *died* for us.
 vi. 10. . . . For in that he *died*, he *died* unto sin once.
 xiv. 15. . . . Destroy not him . . . for whom Christ *died*.
 1 Cor. viii. 11. . . . The weak brother perish, for whom Christ *died*.
 xv. 3. . . . How that Christ *died* for our sins.
 2 Cor. v. 14. . . . That if one *died* for all, then were all dead.
 v. 15. . . . But unto him which *died* for them.
 1 Thess. v. 9, 10. To obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who *died* for us.

3. Σταυρός—Cross

- 1 Cor. i. 17. . . . Lest the *cross* of Christ should be made of none effect.
 i. 18. . . . For the preaching of the *cross* is to them that perish.
 Gal. v. 11. . . . Then is the offence of the *cross* ceased.
 vi. 12. . . . Persecution for the *cross* of Christ
 vi. 14. . . . Glory save in the *cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Eph. ii. 16. . . . Reconcile both unto God in one body by the *cross*.
 Philip. ii. 8. . . . Became obedient unto death, even the death of the *cross*.
 Col. i. 20. . . . Made peace through the blood of his *cross*.
 Heb. xii. 2. . . . For the joy that was set before him endured the *cross*.

4. Σταυρώω—Crucify.

- 1 Cor. i. 13. . . . Was Paul *crucified* for you ?
 1 Cor. i. 23. . . . But we preach Christ *crucified*.
 ii. 2. . . . Save Jesus Christ and him *crucified*.
 Gal. iii. 1. . . . Evidently set forth, *crucified* among you.

5. Σφάττω—Slay.

- Rev. v. 6. Stood a Lamb, as it *had been slain*.
 v. 9. For thou *wast slain*, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood.

- Rev. v. 12. . . . Worthy is the Lamb *that was slain*.
 xiii. 8. . . . The Lamb *slain* before the foundation of the world.

6. Πάσχω—*Suffer*.

- Mark viii. 31. . . . The Son of Man must *suffer* many things, and be rejected. Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22.
 Luke xxii. 15. . . . I have desired to eat this passover with you before I *suffer*.
 Luke xxiv. 26. . . . Ought not Christ *to have suffered* these things?
 xxiv. 46. . . . It behoved Christ *to suffer*.
 Acts iii. 18. . . . God before had showed . . . that Christ *should suffer*.
 xvii. 3. . . . Christ must needs *have suffered*.
 Heb. ix. 20. . . . For then must he often *have suffered*.
 1 Pet. ii. 21. . . . Christ also *suffered* for us.
 iii. 18. . . . Christ also *hath* once *suffered* for sins.
 iv. 1. . . . Forasmuch, then, as Christ *hath suffered* for us.

7. Πάθημα—*Suffering*.

- Heb. ii. 9. . . . A little lower than the angels for the *suffering* of death.
 ii. 10. . . . Perfect through *sufferings*.
 1 Pet. i. 11. . . . Testified beforehand the *sufferings* of Christ.
 v. 1. . . . A witness of the *sufferings* of Christ.

8. Αἷμα—*Blood*.

- Matt. xxvi. 28. . . . This is my *blood* of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
 Mark xiv 24; Luke xxii. 20.
 Acts xx. 28. . . . Which he hath purchased with his own *blood*.
 Rom. iii. 25. . . . Through faith in his *blood*.
 v. 9. . . . Being now justified by his *blood*.
 1 Cor. ii. 25. . . . This cup is the New Testament in my *blood*.
 Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his *blood*.
 ii. 13. Are made nigh by the *blood* of Christ.
 Col. i. 20. Having made peace through the *blood* of his cross.
 Heb. ix. 14. How much more shall the *blood* of Christ . . . purge your conscience.
 x. 19. Boldness to enter into the holiest of all by the *blood* of Jesus.
 x. 29. Hath counted the *blood* of the covenant an unholy thing.
 xiii. 12. . . . Sanctify the people with his own *blood*.
 xiii. 20. . . . Through the *blood* of the everlasting covenant.
 1 Pet. i. 2. . . . Sprinkling of the *blood* of Jesus Christ.
 i. 9. (redeemed) with the precious *blood* of Christ.

- 1 John i. 7. . . . The *blood* of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
 Rev. i. 5. Washed us from our sins in his own *blood*.
 v. 9. Hath redeemed us to God by thy *blood*.
 vii. 14. . . . Made them white in the *blood* of the Lamb

1. Ψυχῆ—*Life*.

- Matt. xx. 28. . . To give his *life* a ransom for many.
 John x. 15. . . . I lay down my *life* for the sheep.
 1 John iii. 16. . . Because he laid down his *life* for us.

10. Κατὰ—*Curse*.

- Gal. iii. 13. Being made a *curse* for us.

Now take all the passages, bearing on and descriptive of the death of Christ, and what must be the inference? Is this the death of an ordinary martyr? Why is the death of Jesus thus selected, thus dwelt upon,—the whole stress of the Gospel, as it were, being laid upon it? Why does the Apostle pronounce “Christ crucified,” and not “Christ baptised,” as the epitome of the Gospel? Why does he say, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the *cross* of Christ,” and not rather, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the crown, or in the manger, or in the example, or in the life of Christ?” Why is it in the whole apocalyptic song not, the Lamb that was baptised, that was born, that lived so holy, that died so meekly, but “the Lamb that was slain?” Why is so much said about the blood of Christ—that which cannot be said about any other shed blood upon earth? The answer must be, that there is something in the death of Christ so peculiar, so singular, so unlike, in its meaning and its application, to the death of any other, that we must conclude that we do not exhaust its meaning when we say it was an atonement made by the just for the unjust, that sin may be forgiven and sinners may be saved.

The next class of phrases may be called—

COMMERCIAL APPELLATIVES.

1. Ἀντρώω—*Redeem*.

- Tim. ii. 14. That he might *redeem* us from all iniquity.
 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. . . . Ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things,
 . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.

2. Λύτρον—*Ransom*.

Mal. xx. 28 . . . The Son of Man came . . . to give his life a *ransom* for many. Mark x. 45.

3. Αντίλυτρον—*Ransom*.

1 Tim. ii. 6. . . . Who gave himself a *ransom* for all.

4. Λύτρωσις—*Redemption*.

Heb. ix. 12. . . . By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal *redemption* for us.

5. Ἀπολύτρωσις—*Redemption*.

Rom. iii. 24. . . . Justified freely by his grace, through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus.

1 Cor. i. 30. . . . Who of God is made unto us . . . *redemption*.

Eph. i. 17. . . . In whom we have *redemption* through his blood.

Heb. ix. 15. . . . That by means of death for the *redemption* of the transgressions.

6. Αγοράζω—τιμῇ—*Buy—Price*.

1 Cor. vi. 20. . . . For ye are *bought* with a *price*.

2 Pet. ii. 1. . . . Denying the Lord that *bought* them.

Rev. v. 9. . . . Has *redeemed* us to God by thy blood.

xiv. 3. . . . Which *were redeemed* from the earth.

xiv. 4. . . . These *were redeemed* from among men.

7. Ἐξαγοράζω—*Redeem from*.

Gal. iii. 13. . . . Christ *hath redeemed* us from the curse of the law.

iv. 5. . . . *To redeem* them that were under the law.

8. Περιποιέομαι—*Purchase, or acquire*.

Acts xx. 28. . . . Which he *hath purchased* with his own blood.

9. Περιποίησις—*Purchased possession*.

Eph. i. 14. . . . Until the redemption of the *purchased possession*.

1 Pet. ii. 9. . . . A *peculiar* people (literally, of acquirement to himself.)

Here is another class of expressions which again show that the death of Christ must have something very peculiar and significant in it. They tell us what we are purchased from—from “all iniquity,” from “the curse of the law,” from “condemnation.” We are told, too, what we are purchased with—with his life, his blood,

himself; not by his example, not by his teaching, not by his miracles, not by his walk: we are purchased, redeemed, washed, justified, accepted, through his death. Again I say, there must be something very peculiar about the death of Christ to warrant the application of such phraseology to it.

The third class of expression may be called—

SACRIFICIAL APPELLATIVES.

1. Ἀρχιερεὺς—*High Priest.*

- Heb. ii. 17. . . . That he might be a merciful and faithful *High Priest.*
 iii. 1. . . . *High Priest* of our profession, Christ Jesus.
 iv. 14. . . . We have a great *High Priest* that is passed unto the heavens. Jesus the son of God.
 v. 1. . . . For every *High Priest* taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.
 v. 10. . . . Called of God a *High Priest* after the order of Melchisedec.
 vii. 26. . . . For such an *High Priest* became us.
 viii. 1. . . . We have such an *High Priest*, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens.

2. Ἱερεὺς—*Priest.*

- Heb. v. 6. . . . Thou art a *priest* for ever.
 vii. 11. . . . Another *priest* should rise after the order of Melchisedec.
 x. 21. . . . An *high priest* over the house of God.

3. Ἱερωσύνη—*Priesthood.*

- Heb. vii. 4. . . . Hath an unchangeable *priesthood.*

4. Ἰλάσκομαι—*Reconcile by expiation.*

- Heb. ii. 17. . . . A merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to *make reconciliation* for the sins of the people.

5. Ἰλασμός—*Propitiation.*

- 1 John ii. 2. . . . He is the *propitiation* for our sins.
 iv. 10. . . . Sent his son to be the *propitiation* for our sins.

6. Ἰλαστήριον—*Propitiation.*

- Rom. iii. 25 . . . Whom God has sent forth to be a *propitiation* through faith in his blood.

7. Ἀμνὸς—*Lamb*.

- John i. 29. . . . Behold the *Lamb* of God which taketh away the sin of the world.
 1 Pet. i. 19. . . . Blood of Christ, as of a *lamb* without blemish and without spot.

8. Ἀρνίον—*Lamb*.

- Rev. v. 12. . . . Worthy is the *Lamb* that was slain.
 vii. 14. . . . White in the blood of the *Lamb*.
 xiii. 18. . . . The *Lamb* slain from the foundation of the world.

9. Θυω—πάσχα—*To Sacrifice—Passover*.

- 1 Cor. v. 7. . . . For even Christ our *passover* is *sacrificed* for us.

10. Θυσία—*A Sacrifice*.

- Eph. v. 2. . . . Hath given himself for us an offering and a *sacrifice* to God.
 Heb. ix. 26. . . . Hath appeared to put away sin by the *sacrifice* of himself.
 x. 12. . . . After he had offered one *sacrifice* for sins.

11. Προσφορά—*An Offering*.

- Eph. v. 2. . . . Hath given himself an *offering* and a sacrifice to God.
 Heb. x. 10. . . . Through the *offering* of the body of Jesus once.
 x. 14. . . . For by one *offering* he hath perfected.

12. Προσφέρω—*Offer*.

- Heb. ix. 14. . . . Who through the eternal Spirit *offered* himself without spot to God.
 ix. 35. . . . Nor yet that he *should offer* himself often.
 ix. 28. . . . So Christ was once *offered* to bear the sins of many.
 x. 12. . . . After he had *offered* one sacrifice for sins.

13. Ἀναφέρω—*Bear*.

- Heb. ix. 28. . . . So Christ was once offered to *bear* the sins of many.
 vii. 27. . . . For this he did once when he *offered* up himself.

14. Ἐντυγχάνω—*To make intercession*.

- Heb. vii. 25. . . . Seeing he ever liveth to *make intercession* for them. Isa. liii. 12.
 ix. 24. . . . But into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

15. Παράκλητος—*An Advocate*.

- 1 John ii. 1. . . . We have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Now what do all these passages show? That the idea of atonement or sacrifice is inseparable from the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are phrases borrowed from the ancient Jewish economy. Was that economy distinguished by sacrifices? Was the idea of an atonement at all impressed and inculcated upon that people? Let us look at their sacrifices. In every sacrifice of an expiatory kind offered by the Jew, there was first a transgressor, somebody who was morally or ceremonially unclean. There was, secondly, a victim,—a goat, a lamb, or a bullock, the blood of which was shed and sprinkled on the altar. There was next a priest who slew the victim, shed its blood, and sprinkled it on the altar. And there was, lastly, the imposition of hands upon the head of the victim. The idea inculcated was that the guilt of him who laid on his hands was transferred directly or indirectly to the victim that was slain, or the goat that was dismissed and sent away into the wilderness. No one, therefore, can deny that the whole Jewish economy was pervaded by the idea of expiation—that the great lesson inculcated in every act was, without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins. Now every one of these expressions is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our propitiation, our priest, our sacrifice, our altar, our atonement. He substituted himself, the just in the room of the unjust; and pardon, forgiveness, and acceptance are associated with his so substituting himself, and so being a sacrifice for our sin. The idea, then, accumulates in evidence that Jesus died, not an example how the good should meekly suffer, but an atonement by which the sins of the guilty might be forgiven.

The next class of expressions are—

TERMS OF OBJECTIVE, OCCASIONAL, AND PERSONAL
RELATION.

1. Ἄμαρτία—Sin.

Matt. xxvi. 28. . Which is shed for many for the remission of *sin*.
John i. 29 The Lamb of God which taketh away the *sin* of
the world.

- Acts xiii. 38. . . . Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of *sins*.
- Rom. vi. 10. . . . In that he died, he died unto *sin* once.
- viii. 3. . . . In the likeness of sinful flesh, and for *sin*, condemned *sin* in the flesh
- 1 Cor. xv. 3. . . . That Christ died for our *sins*.
- 2 Cor. v. 21. . . . Hath made him to be *sin* for us, who knew no *sin*.
- Col. i 14. Redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of *sins*.
- Heb. i 3. Had by himself purged our *sins*.
- ii. 17. To make reconciliation for the sins of the people.
- ix. 26. To put away *sin* by the sacrifice of himself.
- ix. 28. Once offered to bear the *sins* of many.
- x. 12. After he had offered one sacrifice for *sins*.
- 1 Pet. ii. 24. Bare our *sins* in his own body on the tree.
- iii. 18. Hath once suffered for *sins*.
- 1 John i. 7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all *sin*.
- ii. 2. He is the propitiation for our *sins*.
- iii. 5. Manifested to take away our *sins*.
- iv. x. Sent his Son to be the propitiation for our *sins*.

2. Ἀμάρτημα—*Sin*.

- Rom. iii. 25. . . . Set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of *sins* that are passed.

3. Παράπτωμα—*Offence, Trespass, Sin*.

- Rom. iv. 25. . . . Who was delivered for our *offences*.
- Eph. i. 7. Redemption through his blood, forgiveness of *sins*.

4. Παράβασις—*Transgression*.

- Heb. ix. 15. . . . That by means of death for the redemption of the *transgressions* that were under the first testament.

5. Ἄνομία—*Iniquity*.

- Tit. ii. 14. That he redeem us from all *iniquity*.

6. Ἄμαρτωλός—*Sinner*.

- Rom. v. 8. While we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us.
- 1 Tim. i. 15. . . . Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinner*s.

7. Ἄσεβής—*Ungodly*.

- Rom. v. 6. In due time Christ died for the *ungodly*.

8. Ἄδικος—*Unjust.*

1 Pet. iii. 18. . . For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the *unjust*.

9. Ἐχθρὸς—*Enemy.*

Rom. v. 10. When we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.

10. Τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον—*Those under the law.*

Gal. iv. 5. To reëem *them that were under the law.*

11. Πρόβατον—*Sheep.*

John x. 15. . . . I lay down my life for the *sheep*.

12. Ἐκκλησία—*Church.*

Acts xx. 28. . . . The *church* of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Eph. v. 25. Christ also loved the *church*, and gave himself for it.

13. Λαὸς—*People.*

Heb. ii. 17. To make reconciliation for the sins of the *people*.

xiii. 12. Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the *people* with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

14. Πολλοὶ—*Many.*

Matt. xxvi. 28. . Which is shed for *many* for the remission of sins.

xx. 28. To give his life a ransom for *many*.

Heb. ix. 28. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of *many*.

15. Πᾶς—πάντες—*Every one all.*

2 Cor. v. 14. . . . If one died for *all*.

v. 15. And that he died for *all*.

1 Tim. ii. 6. . . . Gave himself a ransom for *all*.

Heb. ii. 9 That he, by the grace of God should taste death for *every man*.

16. Κόσμος—*World.*

John i. 29. The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the *world*.

vi. 51. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the *world*.

1 John ii. 2. And he is the propitiaticⁿ for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole *world*.

Is not the thought still more clearly impressed that the atonement of Jesus was of an expiatory nature, when all the phraseology and usages of the ancient Levitical economy are applied to that death; and when Christ is said to have died ἡπὲρ for ἀντὶ instead of, and περὶ in behalf of, or concerning us? Does it not prove that sin is in some way removed by his death, and that sinners are in some way benefited, as the blessed and glorious issue?

TERMS OF REMOTE RELATION, OR FINAL DECISION.

1. Σώζω—*Save.*

- Matt. xviii. 11. . . For the Son of man came to *save* that which was lost
 John iii. 17. . . . That the world through him *might be saved*
 xii. 47. . . . I came not to judge the world, but to *save* the world.
 1 Tim. i. 15. . . . Christ Jesus came into the world to *save* sinners.

2. Σωτήρ—*Saviour.*

- 1 John iv. 14. . . The Father sent the Son to be the *Saviour* of the world.

3. Ἀφεσις—*Remission, Forgiveness.*

- Matt. xxvi. 28. . Which is shed for many for the *remission* of sins.
 Acts v. 31. . . . Him hath God exalted . . . to give repentance to Israel, and *forgiveness* of sins.
 xiii. 38. . . . Through this man is preached unto you the *forgiveness* of sins.
 Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the *forgiveness* of sins. Col. i. 14.

4. Πάρεσις—*Pretermission.*

- Rom. iii. 25. . . . For the *remission* of sins that are past.

5. Δικαίω—*Justify.*

- Acts xiii. 39. . . By him all that believe *are justified*.
 Rom. iii. 24. . . . *Being justified* freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
 v. 9. *Being now justified* by his blood.
 Gal. ii. 17. But if, while we seek to *be justified* by Christ.

6. Δικαιοσύνη—*Righteousness.*

- Rom. iii. 25. . . . Set forth to be a propitiation . . . to declare his *righteousness*, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Rom. x. 4. . . . Christ is the end of the law for *righteousness* to every one that believeth.

2 Cor. v. 21. . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in him.

7. Καταλλαγή—*Reconciliation.*

Rom. v. 11. . . . By whom we have received the *atonement*.

8. Καταλλάσσω—*Reconcile.*

Rom. v. 10. . . . We *were reconciled* to God by the death of his Son.

2 Cor. v. 18. . . . Who *hath reconciled* us to himself by Christ Jesus.

v. 19. . . . In Christ, *reconciling* the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

9 Ἀποκαταλλαττω—*Reconcile.*

Eph. ii. 16. . . . That he *might reconcile* both unto God in one body by the cross.

Col. i. 21. . . . Yet now *hath he reconciled* in the body of his flesh through death.

We have thus the end which Christ came to accomplish. He came to put away sin, and to save sinners. The *nature* of that result is described as salvation, forgiveness, remission of sins, justification, righteousness, reconciliation. Does not this still more strongly inculcate the idea I am now teaching, that Christ's death was expiatory, vicarious, or atoning?

TERMS EXPRESSIVE OF DIVINE ACTION.

1. Δίδωμι—*Give.*

John iii. 16. . . . For God so loved the world that he *gave* his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2. Παραδίδωμι—*Give up, deliver.*

Rom. iv. 25. . . . Who *was delivered* for our offences.

viii. 32. . . . He that spared (ἑφείσατο) not his own Son, but *delivered* him up for us all.

3. Ἐκδοτος—*Delivered up.*

Acts ii. 23. . . . Him, being *delivered* by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

4. Προορίζω—*Determine before.*

Acts iv. 28. . . . For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

5. Ἀποστέλλω—*Send.*

John iii. 17. . . . For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

1 John iv. 9. . . . Sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

v. 10. . . . Sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

iv. 14. . . . The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

6. Προσθήμη—*Set forth, appoint.*

Rom. iii. 25. . . . Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation.

7. Ποιέω ἁμαρτίαν—*Made sin.*

2 Cor. v. 21. . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

I have given you these specimens of all the expressions associated with the death of Christ contained in the New Testament Scriptures. I first ask you to notice the enormous stress that is laid upon his death; how justification, acceptance, forgiveness, are all associated, not with his baptism, not with his example, but with his death; how the great end for which God sent him into the world was not, as here declared, to set a beautiful example, but to die. I ask you to notice how that death is connected with all the institutions of Levi, which were intended confessedly and professedly to inculcate the idea of the atonement; and how, in the next place, it is associated with our sins and their removal, and with sinners and their acceptance before God.

Now, with regard to these passages, the very eloquent but deeply deceived Dr. Channing, whose dying creed it is said was very different from his living creed, renouncing the Socinianism which could not save, and accepting the Christianity which alone proclaims the atonement and the forgiveness of sins, states, in vol. iii. of his works, after referring to some of these extracts

from the New Testament Scriptures, and speaking of the body of which he was so eloquent and gifted an exponent: "Many of us are dissatisfied with this explanation of the death of Christ ('that it procures forgiveness by leading to that repentance and virtue which is the great and only condition on which forgiveness is bestowed'), and think that the *Scriptures ascribe the remission of sins to Christ's death with an emphasis so peculiar, that we ought to consider this event as having a special influence in removing punishment.*" Here is a ray of light entering into that great man's mind, and showing how dissatisfied he was with the popular theology of his body; and thus inducing us to believe what was reported of him was true,—that he died renouncing his Unitarianism, and accepting the precious blood of Jesus as that which cleanseth from all sin.

Suppose you wished to convey the idea which Channing dimly saw, but which we rejoice to have the privilege and joy of fully accepting,—the expiatory and atoning nature of the death of Jesus,—I defy you, or even the eloquent author whom I have quoted, to select verbs, nouns, adjectives, epithets, and appellatives, that more emphatically, directly, and fully declare that the death of Jesus was expiatory and atoning. If you will read those extracts which I have given, and will try to find language more definite, more decided, more clearly explanatory of your meaning, that Christ died as an atonement, you will find it impossible to do so. The Apostles have exhausted language in order to convey this idea. If they did not understand that Christ died as an atonement, they have purposely, deliberately, and designedly deceived mankind. It is impossible to suppose that men who understand the use and the meaning of language—that weapon of great power—could ever have used such phrasology so often, in such changes of circumstances, in such variety of construction, on so many occasions, out of so many incidents, except they had intended to convey this great idea, that the death of Jesus was an atonement made on behalf of sinners, and for the remission of the sins of them that believe.

Therefore we infer that the system of Unitarianism, which alleges it is not a sacrifice, is simply the creed and misconception of man; that the system of superstition, which says it was not a complete sacrifice, but needs to be added to, is simply the system of the priest; and that that creed is the true one, because the Divine one, which declares that he died, the just in our room; the holy one in the room of the unholy; that the spotless Lamb wore our tainted fleece, that we, the fallen and stray sheep, might be clothed with his glorious righteousness; that he paid all we owed to God, and secured from God far more than God owed to us; that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and that in him, and by him, and through him,—to the exclusion of all repentance, all good deeds, all sufferings, all prayers of saints and intercessions of angels, everything in heaven or earth, however excellent or however bad,—that in him and through him alone, we have forgiveness of sin and justification in the sight of God. Blessed truths are these! Blessed be the God that has revealed them. We have not to climb to heaven by the penitential stairs our imaginations may construct, nor to purchase our entrance into heaven by a draft on the funded merit or virtues of any church or corporation whatever. We have not to do something in order to deserve heaven: God gives us heaven as a birthright, and bids us, conscious of the gratitude we owe him, go forth and show that we are his, and manifest our devotion to his will, by living to his glory and his honour, in doing his commandments. It is not for us to speculate whether God could have saved us by any other process. No speculation, I conceive, can be more foolish. It is matter of fact, that there is none other name but One by which we can be saved—that there is but one process of restoration revealed unto us; and instead of speculating whether we could have been saved by any other process, it is the safer, it is the truer way, it is the only one, earnestly to study what God has said, and to seek to be saved in the way of his own appointment.

This atonement was not made to make God love those whom he otherwise hated. This is not the accepted

view of any enlightened auditory, nor is it sanctioned in Scripture. The atonement was offered not to create in God a love that was not, but to be the exponent and evidence to us of a love that was and is: and it is not true that God so hated us that Christ, to intercept his wrath, interposed to save us; but he so loved us, that he gave, as an expression of that love, Christ to die for us. It is not the proposition of the Bible that God loves us because Christ died for us: the converse is its declaration,—that God so loved us that Christ died for us. The death of Christ was provided by the merey of him against whose justice we had sinned, that that mercy might reach us with all its pardoning fulness, in perfect harmony with that justice which we had insulted; so that God should appear the most just when he exercises the richest merey, and should be arrayed in the brightest glory when he forgives the chiefest of sinners through the blood of Jesus. If this be so, how little reason have we to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Well and truly did an Apostle say, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.” In the death of Jesus was a real and intrinsic grandeur. He died,—the evidence that he was man; but he atoned in that death,—the demonstration that he was more than man. He that died for us was the Lord of Glory. That dead Christ was the Prince of Life. That babe in the manger was the Mighty God. He that said, “The foxes of the earth have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head,” was he that stretched out the firmament and scattered over it its ever-burning stars. And that cross, which to the world was the symbol of shame, is to us glorious as the Shekinah between the cherubim. Christ crucified is emphatically the hope, the trust, the confidence of all believers.

Thus we see the nature of the death which Christ died for us. Its vicarious nature is indisputable. It was not the patient example of a saint's dying, but the atoning suffering of a Divine victim. Have you accepted it as such? Have you closed with God's offer of merey in Christ Jesus? If you have not, why not? I know not a guilt more heinous than that of the man

who hears of the occurrence of such a fact, and retires unconscious of its importance, unimpressed by a sense of responsibility, unattracted to God the Father manifesting his love in the death of Christ the Redeemer. If you are not justified and accepted through him, let me ask you, as I have often done, why? Is God unwilling to receive you? At this moment he waits for you; and if you should wait a thousand years, you will not be more willing to go to God, and he will not be more willing to accept you in the name of Jesus, and the way will not be more easy. God waits to be gracious; he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness, repent, and live. Do you answer, "the provision is insufficient?" Is such an objection consistent with the passages I have quoted? I announce the good news, when I proclaim, as God's ambassador, there is not one sin, be it the most heinous, the most offensive before man, and the most terrible and criminal in the sight of God, for which there is not forgiveness in the blood of Christ. The efficacy of that blood is not diluted by years, or exhausted of its virtue by the number to which it is applied. There is as much forgiveness, and as free, and as full, and as complete and irreversible, in the year 1850, as there was for them who had dyed their hands in the crucifixion of Jesus, and shouted, with atheistic blasphemy, "Crucify him, crucify him;" and who were, in spite of their sins, and through the sufficiency of the blood of Jesus, afterwards received by faith, the very first-fruits of his death, on the day of Pentecost. If, therefore, you are not pardoned, it is plainly not because God is unwilling, or the provision insufficient. Are there not motives strong enough to influence you? Is not the hope of a glorious kingdom, that never can be moved, a hope stimulating enough? Is not the possibility of escape from condemnation and everlasting ruin a reason urgent and eloquent enough? Look down into the depths of the ruin which you have not reached, but to which our sins must drive us, if unforgiven; and then look to the heights of that glory which we have forfeited, and so often turned our backs on, and which the

sufferings, the agony, and the blood of Jesus alone have retrieved for us; and say, if there are not motives enough, in the position in which you now stand, in the danger you may avert, in the glory you may reach, why you should flee to the refuge set before you, and seek now, once for all, acceptance and forgiveness before God.

But do you think, as some most erroneously do, that all will be saved? My belief is, that the dogma entertained by a few is the feeling cherished in the hearts of nine out of every ten of the unconverted,—that somehow or other they will get an interest in the mercy and forgiveness of God, and that they need not trouble themselves about it now. They know not how, they cannot say when; but they are pretty sure that that mercy will be shown them when they stand in need of it. This is not the theology of the Bible. It tells you that God's mercy is to be obtained only in one way,—only by knocking at the one door,—only by pleading in one name,—only by asking through one channel. If it be not asked through that name, through that channel, and for the sake of him who died that it might reach us, it will never be obtained at all.

Mere forgiveness is not the sole result of the death of Jesus. He died, not only that sin may be removed, but that human nature might be restored, re-beautified, reconstructed from its ruins, and made fit for, as well as entitled to, the presence of God. It is as necessary that you should be sanctified as justified. Justification and acceptance are but the commencement, not the close: they are not (to use the language of schoolmen) the *terminus ad quod*, but the *terminus a quó*; not the end towards which you move, but the starting-place from which you run the race that leads to honour, glory, and immortality. If you were a heathen, and had never heard the Gospel, and if in the agonies of death Christ upon the cross were pointed out to you clearly and distinctly, I would not despair, but believe that then and there there would be forgiveness for you. But you occupy a different position. You have heard, this day, what lifts you out of that position for ever. You have heard that God waits, that God is now

willing; and that it is your privilege, your duty, and safety, to come instantly to God. Therefore, if you adjourn your acceptance of the truth, it must be amid the consciousness of a duty you wilfully neglect; it is adjourning to a day for which God has given no promise;—in other words, it is confessing your sins first, and then going forth to do that sin; it is admitting that you know your duty, but, for reasons best known to yourself, you procrastinate that duty.

But I believe the great reason why so few think deeply, and so few are interested in this precious sacrifice, is, that they do not think at all about the subject. The mass of mankind have their hearts so filled with thoughts about this world, that they have not one hour for solemn thoughts about eternity. The morning is for breakfast, the forenoon for business, the evening for dinner, the night for sleep,—not one moment for the soul, for God, for the Bible, the judgment-seat, eternity! They hear the funeral-bell, but they never think it will one day toll for them. They see the funeral procession, but they forget that they will be the main object of another similar procession one day. They hear of death here, and sickness there; but they never think it possible for them to die. Life is the most precarious thing, the most frail thing. The strongest and healthiest have only a lease for the time that is occupied by a single pulse of the heart; and as soon as that heart has beaten, the lease is over: God in his grace may renew it, and does renew it; but each beat is the end of a lease. Soon the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise; and if that be not so soon, very soon we shall lie down upon a death-bed; and if you could only see what I have often witnessed, how pale the splendour and grandeur of the world looks then, how poor, worthless, and valueless its honours, its wealth, its dignity, weigh then,—if you could only realise now what you then and there feel, you would rise and go to your Father, and instantly, in the name and through the merits of Jesus, seek that forgiveness which is waiting for every sinner in this assembly that will.

LECTURE XXIV.

THE GREAT SACRIFICE.

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”—DANIEL ix. 26.

IN my previous Lecture I collected some—not some, but many—of the remarkable texts of Scripture, which describe or allude to the death of our Blessed Lord; and I showed, that if all these texts be collected together, and their scattered rays made to converge, as it were, in one focus, it is impossible to fail to see that the death of Jesus was more than that of a mere patient martyr, and that it is neither unnatural nor illogical to conclude, that his was the death of an atoning Victim, of one “cut off, but not for himself.”

I proceed in this lecture to show, not from the texts which I formerly collected and collated, but rather from certain principles indicated in Scripture, and fairly deducible by our own minds from the language of Scripture, that the death of Christ, in order to constitute the substance, or have a claim to the character, of the “good news,”—to be of any personal, present, and everlasting virtue to us, as sinners, must have been an atonement made, an expiation and sacrifice presented, by the substitute for the sinner. I showed you—what I am sure you must feel to be perfectly conclusive—that the texts I quoted are inexplicable (if those who wrote them understood the use of language) except on the supposition that Christ’s death was expiatory, atoning, or a sacrifice propitiatory for the sins of all that believe.

Let me now look at three great propositions which

seem to me to necessitate the description of death which I have attributed to Jesus, namely—an atonement for our sins.

Let us look, first, at the law of God. What is the law? It is not holiness created, but holiness simply made known. "Holiness is perfect happiness, sin is perfect misery," would have been true if the sentiment had never been revealed in human speech. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself," was not *made* when the law was given; it was only *proclaimed*. The proclamation of the law is mercy, the expression of goodness itself,—for it lets the creature know what the Creator ever does, ever must, and ever will, exact of that creature.

This law, thus clearly revealed to man, has been broken by us; conscience unequivocally says so: I have failed in obedience to it; every thought in my mind, every affection in my heart, every record in my memory, every pulse in my being, tells me I have broken that law, in thought, or in word, or in deed. I have not trodden the path that leads to happiness; I have not paid the price of which everlasting joy is the reward; I have not done the work of which heaven is the wages. That law clearly and unequivocally tells me: "As far as I, the law, am concerned, I can hold out no hope of a passport to glory to you,—no prospect of everlasting joy,—for 'cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things that are written in the law, to do them.'" These words just describe the condition of every one. Under the curse is that state in which we are born—the cold shadow under which we lie. We do not need to perpetrate some terrible violation of God's law in order to be condemned: we are born condemned; we are born in prison; we are criminals by birth—we need no change in order to be lost, the change must take place in order to our being saved, that thus may be turned our terrible and downward procession, and given us an impulse that will lift us from ruin to a state of restoration, from enmity to God, to a condition of reconciliation and friendship.

Where, I ask, is there any disclosure by the law of the possibility of life through our obedience to that law? We are satisfied that we have broken it; we are satisfied, from its own lips, that we are condemned by it. How shall we escape the consequences? Is there any crevice in the whole of Sinai out of which there is emitted one word of the hope of restoration to the guilty? Is there any reasoning mind that will show me that God can be merciful to the extent of forgiving all my sins, and yet continue, what he proclaims himself to be, the infinitely holy, the infinitely just, the infinitely true? In other words, as long as I am dealing with the law, and directed by its light only, having no connexion with the Gospel, and without a ray of its glory, I ask, how low will the mercy of God descend in pardoning?—how high will the justice of God rise in punishing? Will he be merciful, and save all?—or will he be just, and condemn all? Where will his justice stop in condemning? Where will his mercy stop in acquitting and forgiving? Must he not be, as far as human light can teach us, inconsistently merciful in order to be just, and inconsistently just in order to be merciful—a God who is a composite of contradictions and impossibilities, if so be that sin is to be forgiven without an atonement, or an expiatory sacrifice? Is there one intimation, however faint, of forgiveness from law? Is there any hint, however dim, in nature?—is there any rock on the earth,—any star in the sky,—any flower on the field,—any tree, or cloud, or created thing, is there any page in memory, any pulse in conscience,—any intimation in the height or in the depths, any exquisite analogy, any beautiful and fair revelation, in the currents of Providence, that tells me that there is forgiveness with God? There is none. I can read or hear none. Wind, and wave, and flower, and star, earth and sea, memory and conscience,—all are dumb, hopelessly dumb; they do not give the least hint of forgiving mercy in that holy God against whom we have sinned.

Let me look at another division of human nature, and

we shall see from it the necessity for that atonement of which I have already treated. In every man's bosom there is what is called a conscience; and that conscience responds to the moral, just as taste responds to the beautiful, and reason to the true. Any one who will speak honestly, or express his feelings honestly, will tell you that his conscience, however seared, however deadened, however it may have been bribed and stupified, still responds, more or less distinctly, to the good, and remonstrates, in more or less unequivocal terms, against the evil. Does it not often speak to you in spite of you? Does it not often, indeed, excuse? but does it not still oftener accuse? Do not its accusations, on the whole, out-number its apologies? Does it not talk to you in your most silent and meditative moments of a righteousness that is wanting, of a Judge that is waiting, and of a destiny far beyond, that will be for ever blackened or brightened by what you are—sad and sorrowful, or radiant with joy and glory?

Does not conscience often ask, in its calmest moments, what was asked by the prophet of old: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" And in order to answer this question, you have tried fastings, austerities, mortifications of the body; but none of these have satisfied you. You have fled to the cell of the monk, to the solitude of the anchorite, or, like Martin Luther, you have climbed on bare knees the penitential stairs of St. Peter's; but conscience, unreached by these external penances, has smitten you and accused you still. Or, perhaps, priests have absolved you—popes have given you indulgences, councils have proclaimed long and lasting jubilees; but you have found that neither in priest, nor pope, nor in council, nor in absolution, nor in jubilee, nor in mortifications, nor in austerities, has there been any virtue

that could penetrate the soul, and touch and heal the inner and sore part of the conscience; it cries aloud—You are sinful!—and it concludes, on irresistible evidence, that there is no remedy in law, or in nature, for its malady. Thus, if we look at God's law—uncompromising and undiluted law—we see the necessity of something being done to right us in relation to that law. If we examine our own consciences, we feel the necessity of something being done to give these consciences peace.

If we examine, in the next place, the very nature of sin, we shall see the necessity of some such stupendous interposition as that of God in our nature, our sacrifice, and our atonement. Sin is, in the history of the universe, a new thing, a strange phenomenon, an awful interpolation—hateful, frightful, destructive. We do not see or feel it as it is. Our insensibility is proportionate to our spiritual deadness. The more sin contaminates, the more it blinds us to its nature, its demerit, and its effects. Sin is unlike every other thing. Not its least awful characteristic is its endurance; it stretches into eternity, and acts for ever as a corrosive and consuming curse. There is no evidence that sin originates its own cure. If there were evidence from analogy, or from experience, or from history, that sin, like a fever, exhausts itself, and not only leaves no injurious effect behind, but lets the patient return to freedom and happiness, one might conceive it possible to be eternally happy without an atonement. But there is no evidence in this world that sin exhausts itself, or leaves its victim, or loses its virus; and there is no evidence that in the world to come the state of the lost shall be mitigated, or their sufferings, the penal results of sin, mitigated, or the curse that wraps them like a shroud ever put off. Let me illustrate my meaning. Suppose a convict is banished to a penal colony for a term of seven years. If he spends the seven years, he exhausts his punishment, and he is let loose, and he returns again to his native land. But suppose that convict, in the course of the seven years, commits a new offence, that again

he receives the sentence of other seven years : and suppose that in the second term of banishment he commits a fresh offence still : you can see a career of ceaseless sin, and, therefore a course of ceaseless penalty. It is so, my dear friends, with the lost. By the very nature of their being, they are ever sinning, and ever suffering. Sin in the realms of the lost is an eternal evil, never working out its own cure, but ever working out its own perpetuity. By their very instinct, by the very laws of their nature, they go on sinning ; and by the law of God they *must* go on suffering. Who knows but that the awful characteristic of the sufferings of the lost may be, that their sins and their sufferings accumulate for ever, and that hell, in an arithmetical, or a geometrical, or some dread ratio, goes on increasing in its terrors, as the lost multiply their transgressions and their blasphemies against God ?

It is thus that we see, whether we look at God's holy law, or at man's own conscience, or at the nature of sin, that some grand interposition man is incapable of devising is needed, before that law can be magnified, conscience pacified, sin expiated, extirpated, and put away for ever. Only by these, and not in spite of these, can man be saved. At this crisis we have the most glorious tidings that ever sounded in the ear of man : "The Messiah was cut off,"—there is the evidence he was man ;—"but not for himself,"—there is the proof that he was something more than man. The 53rd of Isaiah is the most brilliant commentary on Daniel ix. 26 ; a commentary that has multiplied its echoes in varied accents over all the Bible. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life : " "might not perish," in spite of that law which condemns him, in spite of that conscience which accuses, in spite of that sin which ever works out its own perpetuity. "In him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin." "By him all are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses." After you have read the ten com-

mandments, and applied them in all their length and breadth to your condition and conscience, what a glorious fact that the chiefest of sinners can write down after the tenth commandment, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin." "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound;" "blessed are the people that are in such a case." In the light of this Divine revelation, through the provisions of this atonement, I can clearly and rejoicingly see how God can pardon me, whilst even I am sinning, and as he pardons me, draw my heart off alike from the love, the power, and the pursuit of sin. I can see through this glorious atonement how God can retain all his justice, and present it to us with a greater lustre; all his holiness, and reveal it to us in more august glory, and yet justify from all their sins the ungodly that believe. I can see how this law, which God did not create on Sinai but only revealed, is magnified in his eyes, and before the universe, whilst the greatest sinner is forgiven his greatest sins. Jesus, I am told, thus cut off as our representative, bare our curse and the consequences of our sin: he obeyed in our stead the exactions of a holy law. In Christ I am as if I had suffered and exhausted the penalty I have incurred; in Christ I am as if I had obeyed and rendered perfect obedience to the law, which I cannot perfectly obey. Our sins were *on* him, our infirmities and agonies were *in* him. He was the spotless Lamb arrayed in our tainted fleece; and we the stray sheep may now be clothed in his glorious righteousness. God saw iniquity in Jesus where nobody else saw it; and, blessed be his name, at the judgment-day he will see righteousness upon you and me where nobody else can see it. God hid his eyes from the innocence of Jesus, because our sins were laid on him; he will hide his eyes from the guilt of sinners, because of the righteousness of Jesus laid upon us. Jesus was condemned for our sins, in which he had no share; we shall be justified by his righteousness, in which we have had no personal part whatever. Our sins laid upon him, brought upon him the thunders and curses of the law; his righteous-

ness laid upon us will draw down upon us the blessings of life everlasting. Such, then, is that atonement expressed in the words of Daniel: "Cut off, but not for himself." He died, the just in the room of the unjust, in order to bring us unto God.

But all that I have shown respecting the atonement as yet is, that it opens up a possibility of forgiveness. It may perhaps be, as far as I have yet shown, only a loop-hole by which the sinner can escape from ruin and and get access to heaven. It may be, as far as we have yet advanced, a mode by which we can escape the penalties of a violated law, and be introduced into heaven and to the presence of God, but no evidence that I shall be welcome there. I have, therefore, to intimate, that the atonement is not only the provision of a way of escape, but more,—it is the highest, the intensest expression of the infinite and inexhaustible love that God bare me; it is not merely that I escape by the atonement, that I am simply forgiven by it, but that I am accepted by it. If the atonement were a mere escape-way from the curse, I might just be admitted into heaven when I die, exactly as the criminal to whom I have referred, when he has finished his seven years of banishment, comes back to his native place, and is admitted to citizenship: he is not cordially welcomed; he is looked on with suspicion, and his brand never leaves him; he remains a marked character; you tolerate him, but you do not admit him to your friendship, to your family, or to your bosom. It might be, if the atonement is a mere provision for the escape of sinners from hell, that I should be admitted into heaven and tolerated there, that I should be merely admitted there, that I should be borne and forborne with there. If this were all, it would not satisfy me. I want not merely that God should let me go, but that he should take me back; I want not only to be lifted from the curse, but to be placed in the sunshine of God's countenance; I want not simply to be admitted to heaven, but to be welcomed to heaven—not to be tolerated as a pardoned criminal, but to be welcomed as an accepted

and beloved son. Blessed be God! this atonement, this "cut off, but not for himself," this sacrifice of Jesus, is not only precious for what it does, but for what it expresses: it proves to me not only that God can save me because a provision has been made, but that he saves me because he loves me; not only that he will forgive me, but that he will also take me back; that not only is the *Legislator* satisfied to admit me into heaven, but that the *Father* waits at the threshold to welcome me to his bosom. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Therefore, the atonement is not merely, as many people drily and coarsely regard it, a legislator making provision for the possibility of criminals escaping a curse, but it is a Father making a channel for the outflow of his infinite love, that the prodigal may again be his restored son, that the dead may live, that the lost may be found, and all heaven rejoice that it is so. Never, then, my dear friends, forget or merge this blessed and delightful view of the atonement,—that it is precious not only for what it does, but for what it expresses; not only as the provision of a way of forgiveness, but as the expression of the infinite love that God bears to you and to me, his believing and accepted family.

If, then, this atonement, thus precious and needed as I have shown it to be, was made by our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I think it is impossible to escape the inference that he that made it must have been more than man; that he is, as all evangelical Christians believe him to be, and rejoice that he is, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." If Jesus were simply man, no atonement has been made for us. Judging by the revelation God has given us, I hold that it would have been inconsistent with the eternal laws of God's moral universe, so far as these are embodied in the Scriptures, to condemn an innocent man to die for even a guilty world. For what is the law of God's universe? That perfect holiness is perfect happiness. But if an angel, or an archangel, the most exalted and glorious

of seraphim or cherubim, had been doomed by God to suffer, such a doom would have been reversing his own law,—in short, as great a violation of that law as if he had admitted a guilty creature to be happy. There would have been as great an inversion of God's moral government in condemning an innocent creature to suffer as in admitting a guilty creature to be happy. Jesus, therefore, while he became man, was, and is, God. He that suffered was he that slew; he alone could say (which is the very language of Godhead): "I lay down my life." I need no express texts, though there are many, to teach me that Christ is God, while I hear him saying, "I lay down my life." Man he is, for he has life which can be laid down; more than man he must be, for no creature could say as he did. If a creature were to volunteer to lay down his life, he would be a suicide. My life is not my own; it is not at my own disposal; I have no more right to lay it down than I have power to take it up. Therefore, he who could say, "I lay down my life," who *chose* to die, who voluntarily sacrificed himself, must be man indeed, otherwise he could not suffer, but more than man, the Lord of life, or he could not lay down his life. If Christ be not God, I have said, there could be no atonement; to renounce his deity is to part with the atonement; and if there be no atonement, what is the New Testament?—only a clearer law, a brighter and more intensely glowing Sinai, an improved edition of the Old. But how could it be worthy of the name of "good news" to let me see duty more vividly, to let me hear the curse upon disobedience more distinctly, and the promises of obedience more fully? Such a revelation would not be comfort. I cannot obey the elder law, wrote in Sinai, or on my own conscience; I want not direction only, but remedy. The wounded traveller needs first to be healed, then to have the road pointed out to him. The dead need first to be quickened, then to be taught the direction in which they are to move. But there is an atonement, and he that made it is God over all. Jesus is our Sacrifice, our Saviour, our God. In the tears that trickled down

that countenance, which was more marred than any man's, I can see sparkling the very beams of the glory that dwelt between the cherubim. His pangs and his sorrows were not those of a patient martyr only, but those, in addition, of an atoning victim. I can see immensity in every act, infinity in every pang; atonement, reparation, restoration, in all. The law sought the suffering of a man, and Jesus gave it the suffering of a God. He was David's son, and because he was so, he suffered; he was David's Lord, and because he was so, he satisfied whilst he suffered. Christ was God, God in our nature, and his death was atoning: "He was cut off, but not for himself."

What joyful news are these! One would think if people heard these things for the first time, they would almost electrify every heart with joy unutterable and full of glory. And yet these are the very good news. If these facts be as I have stated—and I have understated rather than over-stated the truth—what, then, may I infer? If Christ be my Sacrifice, my Saviour, my Atonement, my all, then I shall never perish. It is as impossible that a sinner believing upon Jesus for the forgiveness of his sins can perish, as that a guilty being, without faith in Christ, can be happy for ever. There is no more guarantee that the lost out of Christ shall perish, than there is that the saved in Christ shall be happy. Believing on him, I have life for ever. Toward the procurement of the pardon of my sins I have nothing to suffer, for Christ has suffered all; toward the purchase of my heaven, I have nothing to do, for Christ has done all. Whatever I suffer cannot be penal, for Christ has exhausted the penalty; whatever I do cannot be meritorious, for Christ, the Lord, is all my righteousness,—I am complete in Christ, wanting nothing. Justice cannot punish twice: the law cannot exact twice: "he was cut off,"—there was justice meted out to the Son of God,—“but not for himself,”—there is mercy to the sons of men. To them that are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation in the height or the depth, in conscience, in law, any-

where, in the past, the present, the future—there is a perfect and glorious acquittal.

Do you believe in this blessed Saviour? I do not mean that sham belief which can repeat the creed; nor that belief which thinks all is right because we have been baptised; I mean that earnest, living, leaning trust, which feels, as its very life, that there is nothing in the whole universe on which and by which one can be saved but in Christ Jesus; that faith that flees from a law that curses you, to a Saviour that blesses you: that faith that flees from self, with all its excuses, its accusations, its apologies, and sinfulness, and seeks peace through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

Oh! happy and safe is that mother's son who has this faith; for to him there is no condemnation, and nothing shall be able to separate him from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus! Act upon this faith; regard its objects as realities: go forth into the world, acting upon it, and honouring God, accepting all he is and says as substance: "Them that honour me, I will honour." Confidence in Jesus is happiness to man and protection from God. Suspicion of God is misery to the creature, and displeasing to his Maker.

If the atonement be thus complete, we have in this a right and scriptural view of the Lord's Supper. What is the Lord's Supper? It is a feast that follows the sacrifice. Let us revert to the Passover of old. There was first the slaughter of the lamb, which was the painful and the sacrificial part; there was the eating the prepared flesh of the lamb, which was the joyful or the festival part. In the ancient Passover both had of necessity to be combined; the same parties who enjoyed the pleasure of the feast had to go through the pain, year after year, of sacrificing the victim; but in our case these two have been divided: our blessed Lord has monopolised the painful, and bequeathed the pleasing only to us. The sacrifice is finished, the festival is continued daily; and we come this day to the Lord's table, not as to a painful tragedy, in which we are to sympathise with the weeping and agonised sufferer, but to the

glad festival that succeeds the sacrifice, in which we are to participate with joyful and grateful recollections that Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. The Eucharist is not a fast, but a feast; not a sad and sorrowful sacrifice, but a festival after the sacrifice, for which, and in which, glad hearts and grateful and happy songs, and bright hopes, become us; not sadness, not gloom, not painful sympathies. Humbled we may be, because of our sins; but glad we must be that these sins are all forgiven and blotted out through him that died for us and rose again. By appearing at the feast after the sacrifice, we profess our trust in the efficacy of that sacrifice—our not being ashamed of him that offered it—our gratitude to God that such a sacrifice was provided in his infinite mercy; and we say, every time we communicate, that dumb, but eloquent and significant act, "Whoever may be ashamed of the crucified, I am not; whoever may be ashamed of the cross, I glory in it: it is all my salvation, and all my desire." Those sins that rise in painful reminiscences even after you have renounced them—that past life over which you have mourned and grieved, and the errors and sins which, by grace, you have repudiated and abjured for ever, may indeed humble you, but should not make you feel unsafe. Recollect the passover. When the Israelite father had sprinkled the blood of the Lamb upon the threshold of his door, he retired into the inner-room, and, in that memorable night, gathered his family around him. No doubt, many an Israelite father, when he heard the rush of the angel's wing, as he swept with the speed of the lightning through every street, and alley, and court of Rahab, felt his heart throb rapidly within him, and feared that the next stroke of the angel might be upon his own fairest and first-born one. But his trembling did not make the angel enter; not all his doubts, his fears, his suspicions, made the angel pause. The sprinkled blood was there: he minded not that there was a fainting, failing heart within; and on he swept till he found a threshold where no blood was sprinkled. It is not the weakness of your faith that

weakens your interest in Jesus; it is not doubts, fears, suspicions, painful, sinful, unworthy as they are; your only safety in the whole universe is this,—that the blood of sprinkling is on your hearts; if it be there—faith in the atonement of Jesus—all is well, all is safe, safe as the very throne and being of God himself.

You say, “How do I appropriate this blood? I cannot take literal blood and sprinkle it on a literal threshold.” You are not asked to do so. Moral things are not less true than material. Many philosophers say that the material is unreal, and that the moral alone is the real. What you are asked to do is this,—to have faith in Jesus. But even that faith is not your Saviour. There is, I fear, a prevalent and very erroneous notion in this matter. The old formula was, “Do and live;” the new formula many imagine in some degree the converse, “Believe and live.” They think that as the old formula was doing God’s will, and thus obtaining life, so the new one is faith, or believing God’s word, and thus gaining eternal life. It is not so. If it were, it would be substituting rightness of creed for rightness of life; and in both cases it would be something of the creature’s own. The fact is, God requires at this moment just what he required of Adam in Paradise before he fell,—a perfect obedience, or righteousness without flaw, or blemish, or short-coming in his sight. I say, the requirement that God makes in grace is just the requirement that God made in Paradise—perfect obedience to the law. Do not think that the Gospel is simply diluted law, and that the New Testament is simply a lower Old Testament; that God will be satisfied with a sincere, though imperfect obedience, in the room of a perfect obedience. He demands now, as he ever demanded, and as he will never cease to demand, a perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven. You ask, Where then is the difference between our state and Adam’s? In Adam’s case it was his work; in our case it is our acceptance. Adam had to do it; we have to accept it as already done, already achieved, already perfected. It is faith’s province simply to accept,

Adam had to do, to be righteous, and be entitled to heaven; we have to accept the righteousness Christ has provided, and thus be saved. Hence faith is not the ground of salvation: it is the eye that sees, the ear that hears, the feet that run, the hand that grasps; it is the means, not the end. It believes that Christ was cut off, "but not for himself." And if he died for sinners, why not for me? Not, "Why for me?" but, "Why *not* for me?" Thus resting and believing, it has peace with God through Jesus Christ.

LECTURE XXV.

THE MISSION OF THE MESSIAH.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”
—DANIEL ix. 24.

I do not discuss the chronology of this prophecy in my present Lecture; this I reserve for the next, in which I hope to demonstrate, with irresistible conclusion, that Jesus Christ is the Messiah pointed out by the prophet, and that in him the prediction I have read is gloriously fulfilled.

I have already shown that the prediction, “The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself,” was realised in Christ. I have now to prove that the prophecy, that he shall “finish the transgression, make an end of sin, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up the vision and the prophecy, and anoint the most Holy,” has been fulfilled in the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therein alone. And when I have shown that the moral import of the prophecy is fulfilled in him, and afterwards that the chronology of the prophecy finds its termination also in him, I shall have given you the clearest possible demonstration, if any additional be required, first, that Jesus is the Messiah promised to the fathers, and, next, that Daniel spake as he was moved by the Holy Spirit of God.

The first work which Christ is here predicted to

accomplish is to "finish the transgression." By looking at the margins of your Bibles, you will see that the stricter and more accurate translation (for such the marginal translation always is) is, "to *restrain* transgression." We are taught therefore, in this clause, that one great effect of the mission of the Messiah will be to "restrain transgression." Its next result will be to make an end of sin; next, to make reconciliation for iniquity; next, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and the prophecy; and lastly, to anoint the most Holy.

Let us contemplate the first—to *restrain transgression*. I restrict myself here to the one view of his mission here specified—viz. its sin-restraining influence. It is not here said it shall be the result of his work to create holiness in the hearts of his own; this, it is true, is otherwise, and clearly stated; but it is declared that the effect of the mission of Jesus, of the word that he should preach to the people, and the work he should do for them, will be to restrain or curb transgression. Has not this been the historical result of Christianity, wherever it has been effectually proclaimed? On those who have not embraced its truths with saving faith, it has yet exercised a restrictive moral power that has made them, even in its twilight, different from what they would have been if Christianity had never been preached;—in other words, there is an indirect influence of the Gospel, where its direct power is not felt, which has restrained and still restrains the gross and palpable transgressions that degraded and defiled mankind previous to its announcement, and still degrade those that are ignorant of it. It requires but the most superficial acquaintance with the history of the world to prove that it is so. Before the introduction of Christianity, weak and deformed children were invariably cast out to perish in the streets; and this not in barbarous, but in civilised and cultivated lands. What has arrested this? Not civilisation; for the Roman code is so civilised that it has been more or less widely adopted by numerous modern nations. It

was the restraints, or the indirect influence of Christianity alone. In heathen and in ancient times, fathers had absolute power over their sons, and, if possible, still more over their daughters; they might sell them, or dismiss them, as they might their slaves. In ancient and heathen times, a husband's power over his wife was despotic; he might dismiss her for the least offence; he might have put her to death, and it would not have been murder. In ancient times the marriage contract had not half its sacredness, nor a tithe of the force it has now. Woman was degraded; her position in society was lower than it is easy to conceive. What has raised her to her proper and natural position? Christianity. What has saved the son from the tyranny of a cruel parent, the wife from expulsion or cruelty by a barbarous husband, and woman from degradation everywhere? The restraints, the indirect restrictions and influence, of the Gospel of Jesus. Where, let me ask, is the greatest mental, civil, and religious freedom? Where do nations attain their greatest splendour, and communities their highest social power? Where, also, let me ask, are their hospitals for the sick—asylums for the wretched—charities for the needy? These were not known in heathen lands, or in ancient times. Where is life safest in our streets by day, and property most secure by night? Where are revolutions least feared or least likely? Where can you leave your children with the greatest confidence and hope, and with the least risk of contamination, behind you? Where are the laws least sanguinary, rulers least unjust, magistrates least tyrannical, judges most impartial, the people most obedient, the press most pure? Just where there is the greatest number of Christians, and the indirect lights and influences of Christianity are most widely diffused and most thoroughly felt.

It has been one effect of the Gospel to “restrain transgression.” The very twilight of Christianity is glorious; and if its twilight be so, how glorious will be its noon! how desirable its approaching meridian splendour! Those men who refuse the Gospel are themselves

monuments of its indirect influence. Families in which the Bible is not read, in which God is not worshipped, are enjoying that protection under the overshadowing wings of that public peace which the spread of the Gospel has created in the minds, and left on the habits of mankind; and if it be not saving in such cases, it is beyond all expression sweetening and cementing. Society at this moment, except where the Gospel is its cement, is a rope of sand, ready to fly asunder the moment that the coercive, mechanical restraints of rulers and of laws are withdrawn. The secret of our country's safety is in our Bible; the spring of our country's peace, when all Europe was an *Aceldama*, was in the Bible. The indirect influence of Christianity has made our laws so mild—our people so attached to peace—our rulers just, and our exactors righteous. Its first predicted effect, then, is to “restrain transgression.”

The second predicted effect of the Gospel is “*to make an end of sin.*” Literally translated, the clause reads, “to seal up sin;” and hence some commentators think it means to consummate the iniquity of the Jews, and so to spare them no longer; that the crucifixion of the Messiah should be the last drop in their cup, which was previously almost full,—the last weight in the scale, which already was so heavy,—the climax, as it were, of their crimes; and thus, after having murdered the prophets, they were destined to complete their depravity by murdering the prophets' Lord. Then God's long-suffering would be exhausted—his forbearance spent, and to that people the menaced curse should cleave, consuming to the time of the end, and only be lifted away when they shall “look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn every family apart.” But this seems to me not the natural interpretation. It appears much more natural to understand it as the mission which should make an end of sin in the case of all believers; that is, put it away, finish, or destroy it. Is not this the direct effect of the Gospel of Christ? “There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ

Jesus." Christ exhausted the curse in the case of every believer, and shed down the blessing in its stead; the sting of the curse is extracted—its havoc is arrested; and from living beneath the curse that oppresses and irritates, the believer lives beneath the outspread wings of perfect peace and everlasting happiness. This makes a vast difference between the saint and the sinner.

Let me suppose two men, placed in equal outward calamity, a believer and an unbeliever, or to use plainer phraseology, a man who is a Christian, and one who is not. Let the outward eye look at them: they both weep; both feel pain—they both declare that they feel it; they both desire to be delivered: yet between these two God's eye sees, and there actually is, a very great difference. In the case of the one, all the suffering is paternal chastisement; every drop of the bitter cup that he drinks is instinct with the sweetness of the everlasting covenant; his outward suffering, even when it is bitterest, is merely the chalice of an inward benediction, and the heaviest blow that smites him only helps him more rapidly to his everlasting and his blessed home; all things work for good to him, because in his case Christ has made an end of sin, by bearing in his own body its curse, and bequeathing to his people his peace. But in the case of the other sufferer—in the case of him who is not a Christian, all is penal: he suffers just because he has sinned; every billow that rolls over him has received its impulse and its tone from Mount Sinai; every pang in his heart is the rebound of a broken law; every stroke that falls upon him is the infliction of God the Legislator, jealous of his glory and upholding the sanctions of his law. In the one case Christ has made an end of sin, and, therefore, all suffering is paternal; in the other case there is no obstruction to the full influence of the curse—nothing to neutralise its virus, or mitigate its effects. To the outward eye, they weep and suffer alike; but in the sight of God the difference is between the commencement of the enjoyment of everlasting heaven

and the commencement of the endurance of everlasting hell.

If Christ, then, has made an end of sin—that is, of its curse—by being the sacrifice and atonement for it, does not this teach us that we need no other atonement, or expiation, or sacrifice, in order to be delivered thereby from the curse of sin? If Christ, by his death, has made an end of sin by exhausting its curse, we do not need any other expiation, or atonement, or sacrifice whatever. No ecclesiastical liquidation of liabilities incurred is possible any more: no mortification of the flesh can be an expiation for the indulgence of its lusts; no atonement can be made for being late at the opera on Saturday night by being early at the mass on Sunday morning: a Christian has no taste for the one, and he has no confidence in the efficacy of the other. In tears there is no expiation, in sufferings there is no atonement, in a martyr's blood there is no expiatory virtue. Christ has made an end of sin; and we need no priests to offer for what does not exist, what is, when materially precious, morally worthless, nor sacrifices to be made for what is not. Christ has finished the work, and made an end of sin for ever. "It is finished," was the death-knell of Levi—the joyous sound of salvation.

The believer, therefore, receives in the Gospel the tidings of a work that is done *for* him, not the withering demand of a work that is to be done *by* him. The call to a Christian is not to make his peace with God, as ignorant persons often foolishly say, but to accept Christ as his peace with God; and thus they twain that were severed are made one for ever. There is no more offering for sin. But this expression of the prophet, thus descriptive of the work of Christ, may not only imply that Christ made an end of sin by being the atonement for it, and taking away its curse; but also that, in the case of every believer, he makes an end of the domination and power of sin in his heart, his life, and his conduct. This he does by giving the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. I need not tell you that it is just as necessary that we should be delivered

from the domination and pollution of sin as that we should be delivered from its curse and condemnation. We must be fitted for heaven by the Spirit's work in us, as truly as entitled to heaven by Christ's work without us, and his righteousness upon us. If there be announced the performance of an oratorio, and you receive a ticket of admission to it, in that ticket you have your *right* to be admitted; but if you have no chamber in your ear susceptible of the influence of sweet sounds, that oratorio would be a Babel to you, and thus in your case there would be no *fitness* for it. You need not only the *ticket* that *admits*, but the *susceptibility* that *qualifies* you for the enjoyment. It is so with heaven: you need not only Christ's righteousness, or his making an end of the curse, to be your title of admission, but you need also the Spirit's influence in transforming your nature and elevating your taste, to be your fitness. In other words, we believe in a Trinity, in God the Father, who elects us; in God the Son, who redeems us; in God the Spirit, who sanctifies and fits us for heaven.

But apart from this, I see in Christ's work not only the promised gift of the Spirit, but also, in the very nature of his intervention, that which will create in my heart love for his holy law. I see in Christ the embodiment of infinite and disinterested love; I see in him the spectacle of love suffering, dying for me; and this sight of pardoning love in Christ Jesus produces thankful love in me for whom that pardon is procured. It comes to pass that I love him, just because I feel that he loved me; and "love," we are told, "is the fulfilling of the law." "Thou shalt love," is the guarantee that the whole law shall be fulfilled. I love Christ's person, his precepts, his promises, his example; and thus progressive holiness in my life, or love with its glorious fruitage, grows and develops itself upon the basis of perfect pardon secured through Christ. There is planted in my heart an offshoot from the cross, a living and expansive principle that, under the blessing of the Spirit of God, carries me on from grace to grace, and from one degree

of conformity to his image to another, till I reach the fulness of the stature of a perfect man. Thus Christ, by his atonement, makes an end of the curse of sin, and sets me free from its action and its effects; and by the embodiment of disinterested love, manifested in his mission, he creates responsive love in my heart, and so makes an end in me of the power of sin. What Jesus does in the case of the individual, he shall one day accomplish over the whole world. The earth shall emerge from its last baptismal fire, beautiful as at first. Sin, the fever that racks and convulses the air, the sea, and all that is around us, shall be laid for ever, and sorrowing nature cease to weep, and begin to rejoice. She shall exchange her ashen garments for her coronation robes, passing under another and more glorious Genesis, and presenting a dwelling-place for the glorified spirits and the resurrection bodies of them that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Even now, as the Gospel spreads, sin loses its footing and its dominant power upon the earth; like a wounded snake, its life is protracted but in torment.

But not only is he foretold to make an end of sin, but also, to make "reconciliation for iniquity." What is implied in this? The Apostle tells us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that "in all things it behoved Christ to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." So also, in his Epistle to the Romans,—“By whom we have received the atonement (*καταλλαγήν*—the reconciliation).” But it may be justly asked, In what sense did Christ make reconciliation? There is no allusion here to the reconciliation of man to God; there is, therefore, some sense in which God may be said to be reconciled to us. In what sense can this truly be said? for, at first, it seems unnatural. It does not imply that God's hate is changed into love, or that his anger is changed into affection, in consequence of what Christ has done; much less is it implied that his purpose to destroy is dislodged by a purpose to save, through the

atonement, in the case of those who are interested in Christ, and plead the sacrifice made on the cross. This would be to pronounce the unchangeable God subject to change.

In what sense, then, can it be said that God is reconciled to us? Plainly, it means that every obstruction is removed to the egress of God's pardoning love to mankind; that is, the law, which is the written exponent of his holy and eternal will, is magnified, and honoured, and glorified, in Christ, our head; and, by reason of what Christ has done, God can now as reasonably acquit the sinner that believes in Christ, as he can condemn the sinner that does not. God is, in Christ, just to pardon. He can consistently save sinners. The justice, holiness, and truth of Christ, stereotyped in law, not only do not obstruct the descent of God's mercy to forgive me, but, on the contrary, form themselves into a glorious channel for its egress; so much so, that there is no more reason why God should condemn a sinner, in the first Adam, than there is why he should justify and save a sinner, in the second Adam. There is no more reason, no more justice, in assigning everlasting misery to any of those that fell and sinned in Adam, than there is in assigning everlasting heaven to those who are justified and accepted in Christ. God justly condemns all that are out of Christ; and he no less justly pardons and saves all that are found in Christ. Hence the words, "He is faithful and just to forgive us" (not simply merciful, but faithful and *just* to forgive us) "our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Through that reconciliation made for sin, I can feel toward God, and toward his holy law, and toward his justice and his truth, just as if I had never sinned; I can think of God, of the denunciation of sin, and of the glories of heaven and of the judgment-seat and its endless retributions, just as if I were perfectly innocent and had never sinned—with this additional peculiarity, that I cherish a responsive love and gratitude such as I had never cherished if I had never fallen. Christ thus died to make reconciliation for sin.

In the next place, it is prophesied that he should *bring in everlasting righteousness*. Making reconciliation by his death, is Christ's passive work; bringing in everlasting righteousness by his obedience, is Christ's active work. In the one—that is, in his death, and sacrifices, and making reconciliation—he suffered all that man had incurred as a sinner; in his active righteousness, or obedience to the law, he did all that man owed to God as a creature. I feel that I am a sinner, and that sin is the transgression of the law: I look to what he suffered, that that sin may not be my ruin. I feel also I owe obedience to a perfect law, which still says, "thou shalt:" I look to Christ, my head, in whom and by whom that law was obeyed for me, and I feel that I can be justified. By his reconciliation for sin, he puts away sin, so that its curse, the curse of a broken law, shall never light upon me. By his righteousness, or active obedience, he clothes me with a righteousness that answers all the demands of a law that exacts perfect obedience of me. So that I can stand in God's sight, and feel that I not only deserve no curse, but that, in Christ, I deserve everlasting joy; for the Messiah, the Prince, my Head and Substitute, has obeyed the law in my room and stead. We can never appreciate the Gospel in all its fulness, or be saved from the popular and predominant errors of the day, till we feel this in its completeness, that by Christ's shed blood we are completely delivered from all the penal consequences of sin, and therefore need no other expiation, were it possible; and by Christ's active obedience, or righteousness, we are entitled to all the rewards that Adam would have inherited, and more, if he had perfectly obeyed, and therefore need no additional merits. What a glorious Saviour is this! What a complete salvation is here! He restrains transgression in the mass of mankind; he puts an end to sin, by putting an end to its curse; he makes reconciliation for sin, by bearing our chastisement upon him; and he brings in everlasting righteousness, that makes us altogether spotless before God: so that, looking by faith to this greater than paschal Lamb; beholding this

sacrifice, so transcending the victims of Levi; washed in this blood, which has virtues the blood of bulls, and goats, and heifers made no claim to; arrayed in this righteousness, in which Omniscience can see no stain, we can lay aside all our sad recollections and sorrowful forebodings, and ask, in triumphant tones, "who shall lay anything to my charge? It is God that justifieth. Who shall condemn me? It is Christ that died—yea, rather, who is risen again. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord." In Christ I am complete. In his righteousness I am perfect before God. I shall stand in heaven, for ever tasting all the blessedness, and Christ for ever receiving all the glory of it. Not one thread in that perfect robe is mine; and yet not one blessing it entitles to shall be withheld from me. My song shall be the expression of my enjoyment of all the results, and the giving of all the glory unto him to whom alone it is due.

The next end of Christ's mission is here foretold to be *to seal up the vision and the prophecy*. This plainly means to illustrate in his person the glories of ancient prophecies; to be in himself a perfect embodiment of all those predictions contained in the Bible, from the first in Genesis to the last in Malachi, which relate to the Messiah, so that in him shall meet and mingle Moses, Isaiah, David, and all the prophets. We find him explaining the fulfilment of this very clause, though he does not allude to it by name, when he said to his disciples (Luke xxiv. 26, 27), "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." And he again says to them (ver. 44), "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in

the Psalms, concerning me." Plainly, therefore, as I might demonstrate at length, all that was predicted respecting the person, work, sufferings, trials, achievements, and glory, of the Messiah, were, and are, and will yet fully be, realised in him. When Christ cried upon the cross, "It is finished," Moses and the prophets, and the Psalms, gathered round him, and added their united and their solemn Amen. In whom was the prophecy fulfilled, "The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head?" In Christ. In whom was the prophecy fulfilled, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come?" In Christ. In whom was the prophecy fulfilled, "His name shall be called Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the Father of the age to come, the Prince of peace?" In Christ. Was not the biography of Christ the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah made actual? Was not Christ the true crucifix of which it is the description? Who is the prophet whom Moses said God would raise up unto himself, and whom the people should hear? Christ Jesus, as stated by the Apostle in his address, given in the Acts of the Apostles. His life, his death, his birth-place, the time of his birth, his sufferings, his joys, the nature and peculiarities of his death, his burial, his resurrection, his coming glory, were all predicted, and all find their perfect embodiment in him. He alone seals up the vision, and terminates in himself the prophecies that relate to him.

To *anoint the most Holy* is the last clause of this prophecy. Who is this most Holy? The word is in the masculine gender, and means, properly, "the most Holy One." But who is this most Holy One? We are told in the Gospels over and over again: "I know thee," said the unclean spirits, "thou art the Holy One of God." The Apostle said to the Jews, "Ye denied the Holy One." Paul said to the Hebrews, "Such a high priest became us, who is holy." In the epistle to the church at Philadelphia we read: "These things saith he that is holy." The "Holy One," therefore, was Christ Jesus. What is meant by "anointing" him? We have this explained by referring to the other pro-

phesies relating to him. In Isaiah lxi. we read: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives." We find our Lord showing that he is himself the Anointed Holy One, when he takes the very prophecy of Isaiah (Luke iv. 11) and applies it to himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and gave it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.'"

We have the very same prediction in its echo in Heb. i. 8: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." When we go back to the Levitical economy, we find all the priests were anointed and consecrated to their sacred functions by a holy oil, which it was blasphemy to imitate. The prediction, therefore, plainly refers to the Messiah, who, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is said to be a "great High Priest, who was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us." I need not tell you that the word Messiah means "the Anointed One." Hence Andrew said to Peter, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, ὁ Χριστός,"—the Anointed One. You have heard of the *Chrism* used in Roman Catholic churches; it means anointing, and is derived from the same root as the word Christ, which means "anointed." When, then, Andrew says to Peter, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ," he intimated

that the prediction of Daniel is fulfilled; as if he had said: "He who was to come to make an end of sin, to bring in everlasting righteousness, and is the anointed high priest foretold by Daniel, is now come, and we have found him."

I think, now, that this contrast between the facts as fulfilled and narrated in the New Testament Scriptures, and these predictions of the Old Testament, clearly and irrefragably prove that all these find their embodiment and perfect realisation in the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." Show me any one, in all the history of the past, since five hundred years before Christ, when Daniel wrote this, downward to the year in which we now live, in whom this prediction has been, or can be demonstrated to be completely, or even partially, realised. Has any one, in all that period of two thousand years and upwards, restrained transgressions throughout the world by his doctrine and his name? Has any one "made an end of sin," in any sense, or as I have explained to you? Has any one made a "reconciliation for sin," "brought in everlasting righteousness," "sealed up" all the predictions relating to himself, and been anointed the "Holy One of God?" None but Jesus of Nazareth. All the prophets point to Jesus; all the Psalms celebrate him; he is the Key that unlocks them all; and in him all is found to be harmony, order, consistency, and truth. I have no more doubt that Christ is the Messiah, God manifest in the flesh, our only Sacrifice, our only Priest, and Prophet, and Eternal King, than I have that there is a sun in the firmament, or tides in the ocean. It is the plainest of all facts, it is the clearest of all truths, it is the deepest of all convictions. We know in whom we have believed, and that he is able to keep that we have committed to him against that day.

I ask now, in conclusion, have you, my dear friends, any personal interest in this? Is this a theory demonstrated before you, or good news welcome to your hearts? Is Christianity anything to you beyond a topic for the preacher's sermon, or a source for the supply of names

for your children, or a respectable profession in society? Can you say from those seats: "O Lord, I bless and praise thee, that thou didst make reconciliation for sin, that thou hast brought in everlasting righteousness, that thou art the anointed High Priest that ever liveth to make intercession for me;—I bless thee, I praise thee;—my hopes of heaven, my prospects of joy, all cluster about thy cross, centre in thy person, and come from thy deep love;—thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift, the Lord Jesus Christ?" Very awful is that man's responsibility who hears these truths and despises them, —who knows these truths and *neglects* them. Your greatest condemnation will not be a broken law, but a neglected Gospel, a rejected Saviour. There is no reason in the height or in the depth, in the law or in the Gospel, why a single soul in this assembly should perish for ever. God waits to welcome you; Christ waits to receive you; the Spirit waits to sanctify you: and it will be the corroding recollection of the lost in misery, "I did it all myself, and nobody did it for me;" as it will be the joyous impression and never-ceasing song of the redeemed in glory, "We did none of it; Christ did it all from first to last."

LECTURE XXVI.

SACRED ARITHMETIC.

“ Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”
—DANIEL ix. 24.

I HAVE addressed you on the grand characteristic of the death of Jesus. I showed you in two successive discourses, that the death of Jesus—his being “cut off, but not for himself”—was expiatory, or atoning. I showed that it was the evidence of a creature that he died, and the evidence of a God that he died a substitute for us; that it was his shame that he suffered, but it was his glory that he satisfied; and that because the Messiah was cut off, and cut off for us, we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. I then showed you, last Lord’s-day evening, the meaning of that most beautiful summary of the great results of the death of Jesus embodied in Dan. ix. 24, (the epitome of which was all that I was able to give you)—namely, that Christ should “finish the transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up the vision and the prophecy, and anoint the most Holy.” What remains, is indicated in the passage I have read this evening. It is not the most interesting, because it is the most arithmetical; yet it is the most conclusive evidence that Jesus of Nazareth, who was born in Bethlehem, died upon the cross, rose again for our justification, lives and reigns our Prince and Intercessor, is the Messiah

promised to the fathers, and that Daniel here clearly and demonstrably predicted him.

When a prophet gives us dates and numbers, if his prophecy be false, it is the easiest possible of detection; if, on the other hand, his prophecy be true, it is easily capable of proof. Daniel has given us numbers; he has not only given us those grand characteristic features of the life and death of Christ which demonstrably prove that he is the Messiah (for in none before him, and in none since have these characteristic features been actualised), but he has also given us an exact calculation of the time that should intervene between a given *terminus a quo*, or commencing period, and a given *terminus ad quod*, or a closing period. The prophet says, that between these seventy weeks should intervene. His words are distinct and definite. Let us then investigate the proofs of this exact prophecy, and see if it has been fulfilled, as generally supposed, in the age, appearance, life, and death of the Son of God.

I admit that there have been disputes whether the close of the seventy weeks refers to the time of the birth of Christ, or the manifestation of Christ, or the death of Christ, or the extinction of the Jewish polity; for all these are more or less alluded to. But one fact will strike you as incontestible—that if we take the longest period to which the seventy weeks can be extended, or the shortest period within which they can have expired, it must be equally certain, that if the Messiah, the Prince who was to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, has not come, the prophecy is null, and no Messiah, according to its terms, can be expected. Either the Jews are unbelievers, or Christians are deceived. The shorter period within which the time can expire, minus the last week, which occurs after the appearance of Christ, may be—nay, I believe must be—the manifestation of Christ as a preacher, as the anointed prophet, as I shall show you by-and-bye. The remotest moment at which the seventy weeks can possibly be said to expire, must be the overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem, by Titus,

which I believe is not the time referred to. If the Messiah expected by the Jew, predicted by Daniel, delineated so distinctly by the sacred pen, has not come within these extreme periods, these ultimate limits, then Daniel predicted what was false, and one of the most striking pillars of the truth of the inspiration of Daniel, and of the fact of the Messiahship of Jesus, is swept from beneath the fabric of Christianity.

That the Christ is actually come, and is Jesus of Nazareth, I showed you might be proved from the identity of his character with the features here given. I have often thought that when Andrew said to Peter, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ," he had this very passage of Daniel before him. "Here is the Messiah" (as if he had said), "the Prince, the Anointed One. Here" (said Andrew) "is the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy; we have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted in our Greek tongue, the Christ,"—in English, the Anointed One. Therefore it was that Andrew's speech was the echo of Daniel's prophecy; and God was showing in his biography what he had inspired in Daniel's prophecy. I may add, too, as an interesting collateral fact, that almost all the Jews were in expectation that the Messiah would appear about 1850 years ago; and even some heathen writers allude to the prevalence of such a rumour and belief among the Jews; and add, that they calculated that periods of prophecy expired about that time. We have the remains of Jewish testimonies, that just about the time that Christ came, they were expecting that the Messiah would come; and you will find that, though they rejected Christ, they were so full of the expectancy of the Messiah, that pretended Messiahs were constantly appearing, professing to be such, and were often followed by crowds of temporary adherents. I mention this to show the all but universal belief that great chronological epochs had then expired, and that in consequence of this and from the knowledge of it, the great heart of Judaism was big with expectancy of a glorious and speedy deliverer. Many pretenders to the

Messiahship were no disproof of the claims of Jesus; just as many pseudo-gospels are no disproof of the truth and authenticity of the Gospels of Matthew and John. The arithmetical calculations on which I must now enter may in one sense be thought dry and uninteresting as elements of a popular address, yet they are possessed of great importance. If the Spirit of God thought it was useful to direct Daniel thus to write, it is unworthy of us to say it is too dry for the minister to preach, and too dull for the hearer to investigate. It is not sunshine but truth we are to seek after. My dear friends, whatever God has written, man should read; whatever God has thought proper to communicate, man is not only warranted, but commanded to investigate, and authorised to expect to understand. But it is very interesting to know, and truly exemplary for us, that whilst Daniel is giving these dry technical numbers—the seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks, and one week, or the seventy weeks so constantly referred to, he does not do so without embodying in the very heart of arithmetic what is so precious, and to ministers so valuable a precedent, one of the clearest portraits of the atonement of our Lord and its glorious effects, probably, contained in the whole Scriptures of truth; so clear, that if you did not know that it was written in Daniel, and were to hear me read it for the first time, that Christ as your reconciliation for sin, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness, you would say, “These must be the words of Paul, Peter, or John;” not a prophecy, but a record, or inspired description of Jesus of Nazareth.

The words of the prophet are, “Seventy weeks are determined.” Now, do these weeks mean literal weeks, or are they symbolical weeks? Are they strictly literal, or what has been called prophetic weeks? If the decision rested on mere conjecture, the prophecy would be so far comparatively inexplicable; but you will find that it was a frequent, almost a universal habit of the ancient penmen in the Old Testament Scriptures, in certain descriptions, to speak of years under the symbol

of days. For instance, so early as in Genesis we find Moses thus describing the ages of the patriarchs: "All the *days* that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty *years*." In Leviticus xxv. 8, we read: "And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years." The Jubilee occurred at the end of forty-nine years. Seven times seven make forty-nine. Therefore seven weeks in prophetic language, in Jewish reckoning, mean, not seven literal, but seven prophetic weeks, or seven times seven prophetic days, that is, forty-nine literal years, at the end of which, as we know, the jubilee always occurred. So again, in Genesis (chap. xxix. 27), as if to confirm the justness of this interpretation, we read these words: "Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also, for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years"—the week here being the symbol, or the equivalent of seven years. Another very remarkable passage confirmatory of this interpretation is contained in Ezekiel iv. 6, where we have these words: "And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days:"—now that is the simple statement; then there is added, "I have appointed thee each day for a year,"—that is, forty years was the actual period symbolised under the prophetic language of forty days. It is plain, therefore, that it is not by rash conjecture that I interpret the seventy weeks as meaning seventy weeks of years, but it is upon the basis of God's authority. He gives us the precedent of accepting in prophetic interpretation the day for the year. Besides, if the period of Daniel were seventy literal weeks, there would be nothing to correspond with its termination. I do not say this alone is a conclusive argument: I merely state it as confirmatory of what I have advanced. It may be shown to be historically impossible that seventy literal weeks from any one period here indicated could end in the advent of any one that could by possibility be interpreted to be the Messiah. I therefore conclude, I think justly, that the seventy weeks of Daniel are seventy weeks of

years; each day being taken for a year, seven prophetic days in a prophetic week make seven literal years. Seventy prophetic weeks, therefore, will be seventy times seven prophetic days, or literal years—*i.e.* 490 years. The prediction, therefore, is expressed, that from some given period, or as I have called it, a *terminus a quó*, to another fixed period, the *terminus ad quod*, or to the Messiah's manifestation and confirming of the covenant, will be 490 years.

But you will notice in proceeding, that the seventy weeks, or 490 years are divided by the prophet into three periods, in each period of which some one great transaction is to take place. In verse 25, we read, "Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks," [then] "and three score and two weeks:" [these being sections of one period of seventy weeks, and forming together sixty-nine weeks.] "And the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." Then, "And after three score and two weeks" [starting from the termination of the first seven weeks] "shall Messiah be cut off." Then, for one week additional to the sixty-nine he shall confirm the covenant. The whole period, then, is divided into three great sections; that is, the whole seventy weeks is divided into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week, which three numbers amount to seventy weeks. In the first seven weeks, the city was to be built; at the end of the next division, or sixty-two weeks, the Messiah was to be manifested, and in the middle of the last week he was to be cut off, and during the remainder of it to confirm the covenant, while in the midst of the same week he was to cause the sacrifice to cease. In the first seven weeks the city was to be built, in the sixty-two weeks the Messiah was to be manifested, in the middle of the remaining week the Messiah was to be cut off. The seven weeks are equal to 49 years, the sixty-two weeks are equal to 434 years, and the one week is equal to seven years, making a total of 490 years, which I have already specified. We have thus then, all the

details of this question before us. The first difficulty which occurs, if it be a difficulty, which I scarcely think, though there has been dispute about it, is, what is the commencing epoch of the seventy weeks? The words employed are, "Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks:" that is, the two put together, forty-nine years and 434 years; these two periods having elapsed, then the Messiah the Prince should be manifested. I pass by much, after which, as we shall subsequently see, was to occur in Jerusalem, the overspreading of the abomination, the city and the sanctuary with a flood.

Let me then look at the first period of seven weeks, *i.e.* forty-nine years, of the three into which the seventy weeks or 490 years are divided. The commencing period is from the going forth of the commandment to build Jerusalem. When was this commandment given? There have been but four great commands or edicts that have respectively been supposed to be the commencing epoch. There are but four, I say, that it is possible to suppose, or that have been supposed to have been the commencing epoch. The first was by Cyrus, during the first year of his reign in Babylon, at the end of the seventy years' captivity, as recorded in Ezra i. "Now in the first year of Cyrus King of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus King of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with

goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus King of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem." On reading the whole of this chapter carefully, you will perceive that this commission is to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem.

The second command is the edict issued by Darius, recorded in the 6th chapter of Ezra, which it is important to read:—"Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written; In the first year of Cyrus the king, the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof three score cubits, and the breadth thereof three score cubits: with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's

house: and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought into Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God. Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed. Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily. And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes King of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth

year of the reign of Darius the king, and the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, and offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses. And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the King of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel." But this plainly relates, like the former, to the temple, and it alone.

The third edict, which I conceive to be the true one, is given by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign. It is contained in the following chapter, Ezra vii:—
“Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra, the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest: this Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. And there went up some of the

children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king. And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem according to the good hand of his God upon him. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments. Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel. Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand; and to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem: that thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem. And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God. The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out

of the king's treasure-house. And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them. And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment. Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem: and hath extended mercy unto me before the king and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened, as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me."

A fourth one, as has been supposed by some, was given to Nehemiah in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. But on comparing carefully the seventh chapter of Ezra, which it is important to read, where the commission is given to Ezra, with the second chapter of Nehemiah, where the commission is given to Nehemiah, you will easily perceive that the proclamation given to Ezra was a royal one, a general and a public one, and that the commission given to Nehemiah was a personal and

private commission to an individual to go and carry out with great speed and vigour what Ezra had begun; and afterwards we find the two working together and carrying on the rebuilding and the restoration of Jerusalem, its temple, its walls, its streets, in very troublous times, the labourers having each the trowel in one hand and the spear in the other. I therefore argue, that the commencing period was the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, as recorded in the seventh chapter of Ezra. There we begin the whole period of seventy weeks, and of course of the first period into which it is divided, viz., seven weeks or forty-nine years. We find that the sanctity of the Sabbath was restored, (you will find, in the chapters we have read from Ezra and Nehemiah, that I am giving only a summary of what is there,) the offering was brought to the house of the Lord, the genealogies of the people were entered, and the people were separated, and made distinct and peculiar from other nations. We find by careful analysis that Ezra had laboured thirteen years under the commission of Artaxerxes, given in the seventh year of his reign, as recorded in the seventh chapter of Ezra; and that Nehemiah had laboured twelve years under his, the twelve and thirteen years together making twenty-five years. We read in Nehemiah, that he returned from Jerusalem to his royal master, after he had laboured twelve years in restoring the city, and that after residing with his royal master for some time, he returned to complete the work which he had left unfinished. We have now to ascertain how long he remained away, in order to make up the years. In the last chapter of Nehemiah, at verse 28, we read: "And one of the sons of Jehoiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite." Then Eliashib was high priest, and we know this fact occurred 412 years before Christ—that is, twenty years additional to the twenty-five which I have already specified. We have therefore discovered twelve years, thirteen years, and twenty years, that is in all forty-five. Now the difficulty is, how are we to get the other four years. It

rests with you as reasonable men to judge whether what I shall advance makes out the point we are in search of.

Nehemiah returned to finish the work he had begun at the end of forty-five years. Well, the presumption is, that if he had spent so long a time in carrying it on, and if so much remained undone, that he was under the necessity of returning to help it to a close, he took at least four years to complete the work. I have no element that will give me this four years absolutely; I can only reasonably conjecture that when he returned after forty-five years, to give the finishing strokes to this great work, his labours occupied not less, and probably not more than four years, thus making in all forty-nine years on the building of Jerusalem in troublous times, and presenting it, as we know it to have been, presented entire and complete.

Malachi the prophet appeared just at this time, as the last of the prophets; the spirit of prophecy then departed from the Jews. This was 409 years before the Christian era. This cessation of prophecy, the completion of the temple, and the organisation of the Jewish polity, took place exactly forty-nine years (this is matter of fact) after the issuing of the command in the seventh year of Artaxerxes to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem. We have thus then got rid of the first of the three divisions of the 490 years. Taking away these seven prophetic weeks, or forty-nine years, there remained sixty-two weeks from the completion of Jerusalem, that is, the termination of the forty-nine years, to the manifestation of the Prince the Messiah. Now, if we date the one week for his death and confirmation of the covenant from the going forth of the command, we shall find that the 490 years, minus seven years, that is, seventy weeks minus the last one, expired exactly A.D. 26,—or in the year of our Lord 26 the epoch expired. But how can it be said that Jesus was manifested at the age of twenty-six? It is matter of fact that he was not. Some have tried to prove that there was at this time, when the Baptist made his appearance, a commencing manifestation, or what might be broadly construed as such. But

a fact has been introduced in this discussion which settles the matter at once,—that when the Christian era was settled, an error of four years was committed. You will see an evidence of this error in the 2nd chapter of the Gospel of Luke. It is the marginal reading of Bagster's large Bible, and you will see it in most of the marginal readings of other Bibles. At Luke ii. 43, you will find these words—"And when he was *twelve* years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast." Now, in Bagster's Bible, and in Bibles having the full marginal reference, you will see A.D. 8. In Bagster's Bible, called the Treasury Bible, and a very valuable one it is, you will find A.D. 8. But if the A.D. begins at our Lord's birth, the date would have been 12. This is explained by a blunder of four years having been committed when the Christian Era was settled. If this be correct, we have to add four years to twenty-six, and twenty-six and four are thirty, and thus the termination will be A.D. 30. Now we find, as a matter of fact, that Christ was born, not at Christmas, as is popularly supposed, but a considerable time before. The high probability is, that our Lord was born in the autumn, in the beginning of October, or in the spring season. Another evidence of it is this, that the shepherds were in the fields watching their flocks, which could scarcely be in mid-winter: all the inspired picture suggests a serene and beautiful evening, when the angels' song pealed from the skies, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men!" Well, if so, you make the age of our Lord twenty-nine and a half, by taking the period of the year, namely spring, into consideration; whether we suppose the nativity to have occurred toward the close of J.P. 4709, or the commencement of J.P. 4710, within which limits it demonstrably occurred, the year 31 of our Lord proves coincident with J.P. 4740, A.D. 27;* and at that age, twenty-nine and a half, or thirty years, we have the expiring of the seventy weeks, minus one week, or the 490 years, being 434 years from the completion of Jeru-

* See Dr. Nolan's Warburtonian Lectures, p. 474.

saalem and the temple. But what took place in the year A.D. 30 of our Lord's life? He was baptised by John, and a voice came from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was thus inaugurated into his office. He then commenced his ministry, his precious ministry of love and truth; he expired upon the cross three, or three and a half years after—that is, in the middle of the last week, he was cut off, but not for himself.

We have thus, then, reached with tolerable clearness, if I have been able to make myself understood, the completion of 484 years, or the 490 years minus seven years, or the one week, which yet remain. In other words, I have accounted for that part of the 490 years which embraces 483 years, *i.e.* for seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. But one period, a week of seven years, still remains to complete the 490 years. From the going forth of the command to the manifestation of the Messiah was 483 years—the remaining week of seven years added, makes 490 years, that is the sum total. Let us ascertain then, what that week was, and how far the prediction that he should be cut off in the midst of it, and confirm the covenant, have been realised. Christ was to confirm the covenant for one week. There is but one covenant, and this is especially predicted in Jeremiah xxxi. 31:—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers." Then I refer to Hebrews x. 15—18,— "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." The covenant then is plainly the New Testament dispensation, and this covenant Christ was to confirm with many, or, as the Hebrew words might be literally translated, he was to confirm it "with the multitude" for one week.

Now let us watch our Lord's preaching. From the age of thirty, when he began his ministry, to the moment of his condemnation, his preaching was eminently popular. It is declared in one passage that "the common people heard him gladly"—the scribes, the priests, the Pharisees were then, as always, instinct with inveterate antipathy, but the great mass of the people heard him gladly. So enthusiastically was he received in some parts of his glorious embassy, that they strewed his very path with palms, and shouted as he came, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Hosanna in the highest." With the multitude, that is, "with many," he made the covenant; to the people he explained the covenant, and they heard him gladly. But this he did from thirty to thirty-three and a half years of age, or during three and a half years. How does it apply to him after he was gone? We find that what he did *personally* for three and a half years before his death he did by the apostles *mediately* three and a half years after his death, just as he did miracles personally before his death, and by the Apostles after; at the end of this period the Apostles left the Jews, shaking the dust from their feet: Peter gets his commission to go to the Gentiles, and the Jews are cast off, and remain so to this day. During seven years, or, three years and a half previous, and three years and a half subsequent to Christ's death, the covenant was confirmed to the great multitude of that nation, after which it was taken from them, and given to another people. But in the midst of this last week Christ was to be cut off. Here again, the performance and the prophecy perfectly tally; it was in the middle of the week of the remaining seven years that Christ was cut off. Three and a half years from his manifestation at thirty terminated his life, three and a half years after that terminated the direct mission of the Apostles to the Jews as a distinctive and peculiar people. But the best proof of it is, that when he should thus die and be cut off, the prophecy was fulfilled that the offering and the oblation should cease. It is said, "And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and

the oblation to cease," that is plainly the morning and the evening sacrifice, and the great atonement made once a year for the remission of sins.

Most interestingly God's Providence reveals to us the truth of God's prophetic word. The Talmudists say that about forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, that is, about the time of the death of Jesus, the lots were not cast for the victim, or passed into the priest's hand; the wool was not dipped in the blood of the atonement, nor were evening lamps lighted, and the temple doors were all left open. That is, in the very year in which Christ was cut off, or about forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, it is admitted that there was a suspension of the regular office of the Jewish priests; the secession of the sanhedrim had taken place, in consequence of which, the high priest was incapacitated to perform the chief functions of his office. We find, moreover, that when the Jewish national independence had ceased to exist, Pilate took away the robes of the high priest, in which robes alone he could officiate on the three high festivals. These robes of the high priest, in which alone he could officiate, were locked up under seal in the tower of Antonia; and for six months before, and eighteen months after Christ's death, the offering and the oblation ceased, because the priest had not the proper robes in which to perform the one or the other! How striking is this fact! And the very money collected to pay the offering Pilate took away from the Church, and appropriated to the State; and it became a political tax, and not, as it might be called, a church-rate. The very means and elements of Jewish worship were thus exhausted; the sacrifice and the oblation ceased. But why did they thus cease? Not merely was prophecy thus fulfilled—but the shadow disappeared, for the sun had risen! the symbol evaporated, for the substance was come! the type was lost, for the antitype had now arrived! And round that cross, when Jesus died, and in mingled agony and triumph cried "It is finished!" Moses, Abraham, and Levi, and Ezekiel, and Jeremiah and Daniel, and type, and prophecy, and

sacrifice, and high priest, and Levite stood, and repeated each and all the cry, "It is finished," "Amen." The oblation and the sacrifice ceased; the great Sacrifice was come. Is not this reasoning, if not mathematically conclusive, morally so? Is it not the highest possible presumption that the epoch specified by Daniel is the Messianic, that the Messiah predicted by Daniel is come?

First, then, behold the great end and purpose of the Jewish nation. How happens it that this people were preserved so peculiar, singular, separate from the nations? They were placed in Babylon,—but not lost in it: some of them were promoted to high offices, and employed in lucrative works; they were mingled with the people. All analogies, all laws, would go to demonstrate that a people seventy years in captivity, slaves for three generations, would inevitably be lost in the conquering nation, as a tributary stream is lost in the mighty river into which it flows. And yet, at the end of three generations, all their yearnings and their instincts were as strong and earnest as ever towards Jerusalem, and the instant that the depression of their condition was removed, and their captivity expired, their hearts found a home only in Jerusalem. Why was this people so preserved? Because the truth of a thousand promises rested on their being so. God interposed at every period of their wondrous history to keep them for the promised birth of Him who should be of the tribe of Judah,—a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. And so that people are kept still. Do you think it is accident that they are as they are—a people without a country, their country without a people—found in all lands, speaking all tongues, amid the snows of Lapland, on the sands of Senegal; under tyrants that crush them, in republics that enfranchise them? Is it to no purpose that they are kept thus insulated from the nations of the world? Like globules of quicksilver dashed upon the earth *en masse*, they are all shivered and scattered; but the great Restorer shall collect the bright drops from a thousand lands. removing what prevents their cohesion

and they shall meet and mingle in ancient and again beautiful Jerusalem, and reflect the image of him who is the Prince the Messiah, amid anthems and songs, "Hosanna to the Son of David, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that is come again in the name of the Lord!"

In the next place, we have here irresistible evidence, as I have already indicated, that Jesus is the Messiah. The moral picture and the chronological data, both combined, constitute the full demonstration that he is the Messiah. We have no less proof of the striking fact that Jesus died, and died, as I have shown, an atoning death. His death—never forget it—was not the death of a sainted martyr, but of an atoning victim; we regard the death of Jesus not as that of an heroic saint, but as that of an expiatory and atoning sacrifice. It was altar-fire that consumed him, it was a temple life that he led, it was an atoning death that he died. Messiah was cut off, but not for himself, and made reconciliation for our iniquity.

In the next place, this sacrifice was and is finished, perfect, complete. My dear friends, we are justified, not by anything we contribute, not by anything we do, not by anything we suffer, nor by rite nor by ceremony, but by this: "He that knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God by him." Our sins were laid upon him, external to his holy nature; the innocent lamb wore our tainted fleece, and in it the Saviour expired a sacrifice. And as it was just in God to pour out the expressions of his wrath upon the innocent one, because he saw him in the robes of the transgressor, it will be but faithful and just in God to pour out the expressions of his love upon us, the strayed sheep, recovered, and clothed again in the glorious fleece of Emmanuel's righteousness. God hid his eyes from the innocence of Jesus because of our sins laid upon him; he will hide his eyes from the transgressions of his people because of Jesus' righteousness laid upon them. Because Jesus was cut off, but not for himself, we shall live for ever. Every synagogue in London is

a standing testimony to the truth of the prophecy of Daniel. Lambs and goats bleed for the sins of the people no more. Where, my Jewish brethren, are your great atonement, where the morning and the evening lamb, where the great sacrifices for sin? Have you not read, that without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin? Where is the shedding of blood? Why is it not? Rabbi and Jew are silent. Why? I can tell. Because the Messiah in the midst of the week was cut off and made the long prefigured sacrifice, and ended the oblation for sin. Every Jew upon the streets unconsciously cries, "It is finished;" every synagogue in the land protests, "It is finished;" every memorial of the suffering of that persecuted race, their insulation from the nations of the earth, their clinging to Levi, and to the land of their fathers, all proclaim, "It is finished." May it be our heartfelt joy that "It is finished!" It is so. Thanks and glory be to God.

"'Tis finished; the Messiah dies
For sins, but not his own.
The great redemption is complete,
And Satan's power o'erthrown."

LECTURE XXVII.

THE MESSIAH THE PRINCE.

“*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks : the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*”—DANIEL ix. 25.

AFTER having explained at some length the priestly office of the Messiah, as that office is unfolded in verse 24, viz. “To finish transgression, and to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness,” I have thought that I cannot close this first part of the visions of Daniel, which we have contemplated before on successive Sabbath evenings, without some remarks upon that most important office of the Messiah, the kingly office, or Messiah the Prince.

That Jesus is the High Priest of his church, all true churches fully admit—that he is the only Prophet whose word is infallible, all true Christians equally admit. His royal office is equally important. Scripture speaks as often of the kingly office of the Messiah as of his priestly and his prophetic offices; and there is no doubt that his royal functions are just as precious as his sacerdotal, in practical value to us, or they would not have been so often and so distinctly unfolded in Scripture. In all his offices Jesus is the object of the faith and hope of believers.

Let me proceed to give some instances of Scriptural allusions to the princely or kingly office of the Messiah. In prophecy we read—“A *sceptre* shall rise out of Israel”—that is, Christ the Messiah shall be *king*. Again: “His name shall be called [that is, in prophetic

language, he shall actually be] the *Prince* of peace." Again: "I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a *king* shall reign." Again, in Micah: "Thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be *ruler* in Israel."

It was in the belief of these prophecies, or from their having heard the echoes of them sounding over all the earth, that the Magi, when they came to Jesus, guided by the prophetic star, asked, "Where is he who is born *King* of the Jews?" Again, Nathaniel said: "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the *King* of Israel." And Jesus, speaking of himself on that last day when all destiny shall be settled, and the great drama of this world shall be wound up for ever, says: "Then shall the *King* say to them upon his right hand." Pilate, addressing Jesus, asked him, "Art thou a *king*?" Jesus answered in the affirmative, "Thou sayest:" that is, translated in modern phrase, "I am a king." And as if the rays of his kingly glory could not be repressed—as if the splendour of that diadem which the scorn, the insult and reproach of the world were combined to tarnish, could not be hidden, it is declared that his very foes inscribed, under a mysterious influence they could neither explain nor resist, these words upon his cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, the *king* of the Jews." When the priests, alive to the force of these words, said: "Say not the King of the Jews, but write that he said, I am the King of the Jews," Pilate, the unconscious minister of a sublime purpose, was made to authenticate the truth of the inscription when he said: "What I have written I have written;" Jesus of Nazareth is king of the Jews. In him, in short, centre all the royalties of David, all the righteousness of Melchizedek, all the peacefulness of Solomon. He is "King of kings," "the Prince of the kings of the earth." Hidden he may now be; denied by the world he is; thousands may shout, "We will not have this man to rule over us;" but in temples some of which the sun gilds with his earliest rays, and on others of which linger his retiring beams, these joyful words

are sounding from pious hearts and glad tongues—
“Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ!”

In viewing this royal office of the Lord Jesus Christ, and investigating the meaning of the expression of Daniel, “Messiah the Prince,” I may state, first of all, that he is represented in the Scriptures as the true Melchizedek, the *king of righteousness*; as that king, in short, who, in spiritual things, alone has legislative and conclusive prerogatives. He alone can repeal a law; he alone can create or re-enact a law. Paul, Peter, John, the ministers of the Gospel, can say, “A new commandment *is given* ;” but Christ could say, because he is Messiah the Prince, “A new commandment *I give* unto you.” On the mount, in that sublime sermon, unrivalled for its beauty and simplicity—so grand that the greatest philosophers cannot exhaust its meaning, so sweet and so plain that the humblest peasant is refreshed and delighted with its truth,—in that sublime discourse again and again he said: “Ye have heard, An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; *but I say unto you* ;” these are the words of Messiah the Prince. The people felt it, the crowd exclaimed, “He speaks as one having authority.” In short, in all that Jesus did, in all that he said, in all that he suffered, there are the irresistible signs of the presence of the priest, the prophet, and the king; and the unsophisticated multitude again and again admitted that it was so. He alone, as Messiah the Prince, repealed the ceremonial law, by presenting himself as its end, its aim, and its object. He alone, as the great Legislator of the church, as the Prince the Messiah, finished all the functions of Aaron, and unfolded in all their grandeur the lasting functions of Melchizedek. He alone enunciated laws; he alone unfolded new and glorious truths; and every doctrine that he taught, every law that he gave, are king’s words; they bear the stamp and superscription of Messiah the Prince; they constitute a royal code; they are sublime pandects to last while the world lasts, the law and testimony of his people Israel. For any one now to add to the perfect law, or to step in, and say, “Christ hath said so-and-so; but *I say* unto you,” would

be constructive treason against the Prince of the kings of the earth. For any one to add laws to Christ's law, and to inculcate opinions or ecclesiastical truths, however good the one or the other may be, in their place, as if these were of equal authority with the law of Christ, is not only treason, but apostasy; it is to intrude into the king's place, to assume the king's name, to stamp the image and the superscription of Messiah the Prince upon our own vile brass, and give it currency among mankind. Thus Christ, as King, gives us laws; none else are competent to do so. His laws are in all cases conclusive. The law of Cæsar and the law of Christ may come into collision; such collisions have occurred, though not in our time, such possibilities may occur again; but when they do, as we pray they may not, we have no choice; whether it be right to obey God, or to obey Cæsar, judge ye.

In the next place, it is as Messiah the Prince, or as the King, that Christ bestows forgiveness. It was as a priest he made it possible for God to forgive: it is as a king that he makes that forgiveness actual to us. It was upon his cross that he purchased forgiveness; it is from his throne that he bestows that forgiveness. If Christ had never died for us, the possibility of our forgiveness had not been; if Christ did not sit a prince upon his throne, the fact of our forgiveness could not be. Let us praise him that he died for us; let us praise him that he reigns for us. Let us rejoice that forgiveness is possible, for Jesus died; let us rejoice that forgiveness is obtainable, for Jesus reigns, Messiah the Prince. He alone could say, "I died for sins;" he alone can say, "I bestow the forgiveness of sins." It is, my dear friends, as much an encroachment on the kingly office of Christ to assume to forgive sin, as it is an encroachment on the priestly office of Christ to pretend to purchase, or to suffer for, or to deserve, the forgiveness of sin. The hand that bled upon the cross, that was pierced by the nail, is the only hand that can be stretched out to bestow forgiveness upon me. For any one to pronounce a judicial absolution is an intrusion into the kingly office of the Lord Jesus Christ. He who atoned alone can absolve.

It is a remarkable fact, that during the first four centuries of the Christian church, when the pretensions of the priesthood began to be stretched to an extravagant pitch, and many of the fathers, such as Chrysostom, began to speak of the priesthood as the *ordo divinus*—"the divine order," there is not one instance recorded of absolution being pronounced, by priest or prelate, in the first person singular, "I absolve." In all the very ancient offices, absolution was simply a prayer, and not a judicial act. And it is a pity that in the service of the Church of England, amid so many services that are beautiful, there is one—I admit, fallen very much into desuetude—in which is still a *formula* of absolution which is not Scriptural, not truly primitive, "I absolve thee." I know it is understood by evangelical ministers to be declarative, but it is made the basis of pretensions on the part of ministers of another stamp on which they assume to pronounce a judicial absolution. A minister has no more power to absolve sins than a layman. I believe truly the words which Martin Luther uses: "A pope or a bishop has no more power to remit sin than the humblest priest; nay, without any priest, every Christian, even though a woman or a child, can do the same. If a simple believer, woman or child, say to thee, 'God pardon thy sins, in the name of Jesus Christ,' and thou receive the word with a firm faith, thou art absolved in God's sight." So completely did that great reformer sweep out of the visible church all idea of a priesthood among the ministers of the Gospel. The great nucleus of the growing apostasy that is around us is the idea of a priesthood being the true character of the Christian ministry. There is no such officer, I have often told you, as a *ἱερεὺς*, a sacrificing priest, in the Church of Christ. It would be more appropriate that a colonel of a regiment should stand by the communion-table, because he may be a Christian, than that a sacrificing priest should pretend to do so: we know of no such officer; there is no room for him. The introduction of the idea that the ministers of the Gospel are sacrificing priests, is the opening of the door for the

inrush of the full flood of the Western apostasy. Christ alone absolves: as a priest he purchased forgiveness, and he has all the glory of that; as a king he bestows forgiveness, and he claims all the glory of that. It is the very essence of Protestant and Scriptural Christianity, not to keep you for a moment by the priest, but to bring you to Christ for the price of forgiveness, to Christ for the bestowal of forgiveness; that Christ in the midst of the church, and in the believer's heart, as Prophet, Priest, and King, may be all and in all.

In the next place, it is as a King that the Lord Jesus Christ appoints and sends forth ministers of the Gospel. Such appointment is the fruit of his intercession; it is also the commission of his kingly power. It matters not, or it may matter not, by what ecclesiastical formula or canon or rite the minister may be appointed; if he be a true minister, he is sent by the Lord Jesus Christ; for when he ascended up on high, "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." No human commission can be a substitute for the divine one; the true presentation is from the upper throne; the real ordination is under the hand of Jesus. The appointment of a minister is a royal one, but it is from a royalty that lives and lasts beyond the stars—the royalty of Messiah the Prince. Perhaps, if we quarrelled less about ecclesiastical formulæ, and honoured more the kingship of Christ, by asking oftener of Messiah the Prince to send forth labourers into the vineyard, it would be better for the Church of Christ. A patron may present one who has every ecclesiastical fitness, but yet he may not be a minister of Christ. The people may elect one who has every element of eloquence, and yet he may not be a minister of Christ. I do not believe in the infallibility of the people any more than in the infallibility of the patron. Christ alone can create, Christ alone can commission a minister, and it is an invasion of his royal prerogative to think that any one form is infallibly successful, or that it alone may be used for the appointment of ministers of the Gospel.

In the next place, it is as Messiah the Prince, it is as Christ the King, that he gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. As a Priest he opened up the way for the descent of that Spirit; as a King he commissions and sends forth that Holy Spirit unto them that ask him. Pentecost is the evidence of the kingly office of the Lord Jesus Christ; regeneration in the individual heart is the impress struck by the King of Glory, Messiah the Prince. Every true Christian is a current coin of that royal realm, on which Christ has struck the image and superscription of himself. Wherever you see a Christian, you have there the evidence that Christ reigns; wherever a regenerated heart beats, there you have a proof that Messiah the Prince lives, and sits upon his throne a Prince and an Intercessor.

In the next place, it is in his kingly capacity that Christ will decide at the judgment day. You recollect the very words that he uses: "Then shall the *King* say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed;" "Then shall the *King* answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these little ones, ye have done it unto me." It is in his royal capacity—it is as Messiah the Prince, that Christ pronounces the everlasting doom of the lost, and declares the everlasting and irreversible destiny of the saved. It is the King that says, and it is therefore a royal word, "Come ye blessed;" it is the King that says, and therefore it is a royal decree, "Depart, ye cursed." At that royal sound all that sleep in their graves shall instantly awake: the particles of dust that float upon the wind shall become consolidated into organised frames; the very gases that mingle with the atmosphere, and are absorbed by the streams of the earth, shall come out distinguished and eliminated at that royal bidding, and form the bodies of the risen saints of the Most High. That royal sound shall pierce the pyramids where the Ptolemys sleep; it shall enter the grave where the dust of the beggar rests; it shall come with its reverberation into the ancient urn, and stir the ashes of the long silent dead; and all—the

beggar under the green turf, the prince in his mausoleum of marble or of brass, shall come forth with equal readiness to answer for the deeds done in the body, to Messiah the Prince, to Christ the King. He then shall pronounce the rewards and punishments of the last day; and he alone can do it. Man, as a king, a legislator, or a judge, can punish for outward acts that outwardly contravene the laws of the land; but Christ alone has power, and he claims it as his exclusive prerogative, to punish for inward sentiments, emotions, convictions, passions, desires. Man, the legislator or judge, may and will punish the subject that breaks the laws; but no king upon the earth may put his royal hand into that holy place called the conscience, even in the bosom of the poorest beggar; it is too sacred for kings to touch; its solemn nature is too awful for legislators to intermeddle with: and the prince or magistrate that persecutes a person for the opinions that he holds, however erroneous these opinions may be, not only intrudes on the prerogative of Messiah the Prince, but he consecrates the error in the eyes of thousands, and elevates the sufferer into the dignity of a martyr for the rights, the liberties, and the privileges of mankind. Persecution never put down an error, and it never promoted a truth; we have far better weapons; we want it not; if we dare use it, we will not, it is too weak; "The weapons of our warfare are *not carnal*, but *mighty*, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds."

This leads me to remark, in the next place, that this kingly office of the Lord Jesus Christ is just as intransferable as his priestly office. What is not the least sin of the Church of Rome? and in its degree of the Tractarian party? Just this—that they claim for the Church, as a visibly organised body, the functions of prophet, priest, and king; they speak of the Church—meaning by the Church practically the hierarchy—as if it were the prophet, priest, and king of the people; while the Pope with greater consistency, but with intenser blasphemy, calls himself the prophet of the Church, the high priest of the Church, and the king of the Church,

and wears, as the demonstration that he is so, the tiara, or the three-fold crown, that stamps him in his own view to have the three-fold functions—that proclaims him in our view to be the antichrist, “sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as if he were God.” No pastor in the church may lawfully assume to be a king in it, any more than he may assume to be a priest in it. The function of a minister of the Gospel is purely pastoral; it is not in the least degree regal. You, my dear friends, the communicants and worshippers in this church, are not *my subjects*, and I am not *your lord*; you are my friends and brethren, and I am your servant for Christ’s sake. I am not appointed by the Great King to lord it over the heritage of God; but I am appointed and commissioned by him to feed the flock of Christ which he has entrusted unto me. My function is pastoral, not regal; it is the shepherd’s crook, not the monarch’s sceptre. In the next place, the Lord Jesus, as the Messiah the Prince, is spoken of in Scripture as the “Prince of the kings of the earth.” All kings are, or ought to be, his subjects, responsible to him for the dutifulness with which they serve and obey him; and as his subjects, and ministers, and servants, their mighty influence should be consecrated to his glory, and to the advancement of his truth.

He is also called in Scripture the “Prince of life.” What an epithet is that; Christ is the Prince of life. The kings of this world cannot perpetuate life; the mightiest sovereign of the mightiest empire must lie down, and turn his face to the wall, and die as one of the meanest of the people. The bones and the ashes of royalty are scattered through every land; death enters as unceremoniously royal palaces as poor men’s hovels, and beats with equal foot* at the doors of both. But Jesus can say: “I live, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore;” Jesus can say: “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he

* “———Æquo pede pulsat
Pauperum tabernas regumque turres.”—Horace.

were dead, yet shall he live." Christ gives life; he assumes to do so; he proclaims himself the Prince of life: he that does so is either God, or is a blasphemer; but "we know in whom we have believed," and that when he called himself the Prince of life, he claimed the glory that is justly due to him, and is exclusively his own.

The Lord Jesus is proclaimed in Scripture not only the Prince of life, but he is also the Prince of peace. There was a controversy between God and man; not that God had changed, but that man had become guilty; conscience felt its sin, foresaw and foreboded the advent of its Judge, and it trembled. But Christ, having come, has made peace by the blood of his covenant, and constituted himself the Prince of peace. And now it comes to pass that that which satisfies the justice of God is also able to satisfy the conscience of man. Nothing, my dear friends, can satisfy my conscience except that blood that gave satisfaction to the justice and the holiness of God. If we wish national peace, social peace, domestic peace, universal peace, we never can secure it by conventionalism, by organisation, by eloquent eulogia on peace, by animated pictures of its glories and its beauties: the only basis on which peace can grow is the basis of righteousness and truth; there can no more be peace without the Prince of peace than there can be light without the sun, or the beating heart without the life-blood circulating through it. The true way, then, to have universal peace, is to have universal Christianity. The right way to render soldiers, which some so declaim against, (though I doubt if it is more sinful to be a soldier than to be a lawyer; I question if a lawyer's weapons are not often as unchristian as a soldier's,) altogether and in all concerns unnecessary, and to turn the bayonet into the pruning-hook, to hang the clarion in the hall, and let nations hear the roll of war's conquering drum no more, is, not to dismiss the army, but to preach and promote among civilians the knowledge of him who is the Prince of peace, and under whose shadow and sceptre alone there can be permanent and

blessed peace. "There is no peace to the wicked;" preach it as you like, individuals and nations must become Christians before they can enjoy or maintain peace. Spread Christianity, and there will be peace; recognise Christ as the true Melchizedek, the King of righteousness, and you will soon have Jesus as the true Melchisalem, the Prince of peace. Bow before the sceptre of Christ the King, and you will soon live under the olive branch of the Prince of peace.

As Christ the King has a kingdom, we may inquire what it is? It is not, as some seem to misapprehend, meat and drink. The Apostle says, "The kingdom of God is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is, therefore, neither fasting nor feasting, neither rubric nor rite, nor ceremony; these things may be too few or they may be too many, they may be too severe or they may be too gorgeous; they are but the shells, the husks; they are not the substantial elements of the kingdom of Christ. Nor is that kingdom Episcopacy, nor is it Presbytery, nor is it Congregationalism; nor is it immersion, nor is it sprinkling, nor is it baptism in infancy, nor in maturer years: these things may be, or they may not be; they may be good or they may be bad, or they may be indifferent; but they are not the substantial elements of the kingdom of Christ: it flourishes and spreads without them, often in spite of them, for it is something stronger and higher than them all—it is righteousness: righteousness without us, which is Christ's; righteousness within us, which is the Spirit's; the righteousness which is imputed and perfect, and by which we are justified; the righteousness which is imparted and imperfect, and by which we are sanctified—the one our title, the other our fitness for heaven. And it is "peace;" peace with conscience, peace with our brethren, peace with God and with all the universe besides. And it is "joy." It begins in righteousness, it grows in power, it spreads in peace, it culminates in beauty, in glory, and in joy: it is planted as a seed in the individual heart; it germinates and grows, till upon the mountain-tops it waves with fruit like Lebanon, and the whole earth is covered

with the harvest of its glory. The existence of this kingdom upon earth, the elements of which I have tried to define, is evidence of the presence of a Divine royalty in the midst of it. It is a kingdom that derives no nutriment from the earth; it is not of the world, though it is in it. Left to itself, Christianity, with all its excellence, would have expired long ago. It is as necessary that the King should be upon his throne in the midst of his Church, as it is that the High Priest should be by his altar in the midst of it; it is as necessary that Christ's sceptre should be over the towers of Zion, as that Christ's cross should be set forth in its creeds, and sermons, and prayers, and services. No professions, no rites, no ceremonies, no polity could save a living church from destruction, if Christ were to cease to be true to that promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." But because the king has been in it, no weapon formed against it has prospered. Heresy has tried to corrupt it; power has sought to extirpate it. Like a tender flower amidst the Alpine snows,—like a tiny spark amid the billows of the sea,—like the ark with Moses in it amid the waters of the Nile, with mighty forces gathered round ready to overwhelm it, has the Church of Christ been in the history of the world, and in the experience of mankind. His commission, "Go and preach," was a royal one; his promise, "Lo, I am with you always," is equally a royal one. This kingdom, it is true, is not outward and visible: the soul is the seat of its power; its victories, its glories, its achievements are all there. And, blessed be God, this kingdom, invisible to sight, but real to faith, and hope, and joy, and to every Christian heart, is a broad and comprehensive one; it is not restricted to a sect, but comprehends many of every name; it is not limited to the world, but stretches beyond the stars. Europe is not all Christendom; Europe, Asia, Africa, and America are not the whole of Christendom; Christendom stretches into eternity; we have brethren beside the throne who drink of the stream as it bursts from the fountain, while we drink of the same stream as it flows by the footstool. Christendom comprehends saints in

triumph and saints that are militant—heaven and earth, in short, all God's people.

The entrance into this kingdom—what is it? A way so broad that there is no criminal in this audience (if such there be here) that may not enter; and yet a way so holy that he must lay down his criminality the instant that he takes a single step upon it. The way into this kingdom is not by gold, nor frankincense, nor myrrh—these cannot buy it; politicians cannot create it; it is Christ alone its *title*, regeneration by the Spirit alone the *fitness* for it.

The law of this realm, the true Christendom—what is it? It is not law, it is love; its subjects, we are told, love one another. Jesus governs by love; it is the pavilion of his power, it is the throne of his glory, it is the badge of his subjects, it is the cohesion of his own grand and mighty kingdom. One law governs the clouds in the air, and binds the worlds to the sun; one instinct guides the emigrant birds from home, and back to home again: so one passion—love—guides and governs all the subjects of Christ, and his kingdom coheres and moves in harmony, because they have learned to love Christ and to love one another.

And this kingdom comes quietly. Jesus, when he walked in Palestine, was surrounded by no pomp or parade; he shot forth no blazing and sensuous splendour on those that were around him; he came as his kingdom comes—like the rain upon the mown grass, as the showers that water the earth. This kingdom, made up of righteousness, joy, and peace, comes like the sweet of spring—gentle, soft, yet persistent. The seed sown in tears, watered with blood, grows up quietly while men sleep, and while men wake. Satan falls from heaven like a flash of lightning, or the thunderbolt; but the Holy Spirit comes from heaven descending like a gentle dove. The kingdom of sin passes away like a fierce whirlwind: the kingdom of Jesus comes softly like the morning light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Brethren, are you the subjects of Messiah the Prince? Are you members of this Divine kingdom, this holy

company, this happy fellowship? All members of all visible churches are not so; all baptised men, however baptised, are not so. There are good fishes and bad in the net; there are tares and wheat in the visible church. Salvation is not union to a church, but union to Christ. To belong to this kingdom is to be renewed in heart, and not merely to be baptised by man. And they who are the subjects of it are those Thessalonians of whom we read that they have "the work of faith, the labour of love, the patience of hope," who are chosen in Christ, who are missionaries to all that are around them, who are patiently waiting for the son of God from heaven. Are you subjects of this King? Do you love his law? Do you feel in your heart that law which is love? "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ," it matters not whether he be a churchman or a dissenter, "he is none of his." If we love him, and love the brethren as he hath given us commandment, we are his. And what a glorious King! Hannibal conquered, and is gone; his existence is a fact, a dead fact, and no more. Cæsar reigned, and is gone; his reign is a fact, a dead fact, and no more. But Jesus lived, and lives; his reign is a living and ever governing fact; he reigned, and reigns; fresh and actual is his sceptre to-day as when first he proclaimed his kingdom. His kingdom sinks not into sands of oblivion, it is obstructed by no power, it grows in beauty, it spreads in influence; and very soon we shall behold the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off; and he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and all shall bless him, and shall be blessed in him; and the prayers of his people, like the prayers of David the son of Jesse, will then be ended.

"With anthems of devotion
Ships from the isles shall meet,
And pour the wealth of ocean
In tribute at his feet.

"For he shall have dominion
O'er river, sea, and shore;
Far as the eagle's pinion
Or dove's light wing can soar."

LECTURE XXVIII.

JERUSALEM AND THE JEWS.

“ And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.—DANIEL ix. 26, 27.

I HAVE shown by a previous comparison between the characteristics of the work of the Messiah, as predicted in the 24th verse of this chapter, and the actual facts that are recorded of the life of Jesus, that he is the Messiah, and that he alone has finished the transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in everlasting righteousness, sealed up the vision and the prophecy, and is anointed now the most Holy. I showed in a previous discourse that not only did a comparison of the moral characteristics, as they are unfolded in the prophecy, and find a counterpart in Jesus, prove him to be the Messiah; but the chronology of the passage no less unequivocally attests it. I showed, that from the time when the command went forth in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, as recorded in the seventh chapter of Ezra, to rebuild Jerusalem, to the manifestation of Jesus Christ at the baptism of John the Baptist, there elapsed exactly seventy prophetic weeks, or seventy times seven, or 490 years—minus the remaining week (or seven years),

in the midst of which he was to be cut off. I showed that in the midst of the last week here specified the Messiah suffered. I gave you the clear and irresistible evidence of it in the sudden cessation of all the sacrifices of Levi; in the fact that Pilate had plundered the high priest of his robes, shut them up in the tower of Antonia, and made it impossible for the high priest to offer up the great sacrifice appointed by law; in the fact that after the death of Jesus, and the desolation of the temple, the Jews were, and are still, without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a high priest. In short, the evidence is irresistible, that if Jesus be not the Messiah, it is in vain that the Jews look for another. Many of them are coming to this conclusion. I have heard repeatedly in late years, that on the continent of Europe many of the Jews are become sceptics, casting off even the hopes of Israel, believing that all has been false, because the disappointment is so bitter. But it is when their hopes shall be lowest that the glory of Israel shall rise upon them; it is at eventide that it shall be light; and when Israel's depression shall be the deepest, and its despair of a coming Messiah shall have reached its meridian, then shall he come, and "shine before his ancients gloriously," "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel."

In this lecture I wish to close this portion of the prophecies of Daniel, on which I have spent so many Sabbath evenings, by referring to the sequel of the prediction contained in these verses—namely, the destruction, desolation, and sweeping away of Jerusalem, its temple, and all its glory. It is expressly predicted in verse 26, that "the people of the prince that shall come" (that is, the Romans, the subjects of Titus or Vespasian,) "shall destroy the city." The words are literally, "the people of the leader who is to come." *POPULUS* was the distinctive and emphatic title of the Romans. Their rulers assumed no higher title than *IMPERATOR*, or *Ruler*. The prediction is verbally accurate, and pre-allusive in every respect. It was ploughed up, according to ancient prophecy: the plough-

share literally tore up its walls; and as to the sanctuary, not a trace of that temple remains. Is it not remarkable that while the temple of Jerusalem was the most majestic and magnificent erection in the world, surpassing in its splendour even the temple of Diana, far surpassing all the temples that remain in heathendom in strength, in grandeur, in fitness to bear the wear of weather, and to defy the fierce tempest; not one memorial of it remains above ground? The only *possible* remain is a large stone, noticed by a deputation that visited Jerusalem, still kissed by the rabbis that go there for the first time; as if the 102nd Psalm could not contain a prophecy without its being fulfilled—

“Thy saints [to use our own Scottish version,] take pleasure in
her stones,

Her very dust to them is dear.”

With that exception the temple of Jerusalem is gone; yet remains of ancient heathen temples are traceable everywhere. But when I express amazement that not one trace remains, why should I? The Lord of all truth had said, “Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down;” and Daniel said, “The end thereof shall be with a flood,”—that is, the destruction of this city and of its temple shall not be a gradual thing. The Parthenon at Athens has been gradually wasting by winds, rains, and storms, and fragments of it are in the Louvre in Paris, and in the British Museum in London; the great theatres or amphitheatres at Rome are still wasting and mouldering; but it was prophesied of the temple of Jerusalem that “the end thereof shall be with a flood,”—its last trace should be utterly swept away; “and unto the end of the war”—that is God’s war against that race—“desolations are determined,” that is, no one need try to rebuild it. It is a very remarkable history—whether true or not, I cannot say, but I see no reason to doubt it—that Julian the Apostate, learning from the Christians that God had predicted the final destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, and that it should never be rebuilt until the time of his great controversy with the Jews

should be finished, and they should be recalled, and restored in more than their ancient grandeur, said he would refute that prophecy; and in order to do so, he appointed workmen, and supplied money, to rebuild the temple. The record of ancient writers is, that fire-balls burst in all directions from the earth, which alarmed the workmen, and made them cease. Whether the occurrence of a miraculous obstruction be literally true or not, I cannot say; but this I believe is true—that the attempt was frustrated, that the workmen gave it up in despair, and that Julian learned that one word of the everlasting God was stronger than the legions of Cæsar, and richer than all the treasures of imperial Rome.

Then it is added in the 27th verse, that after the sacrifice and oblation should cease, “for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate.” You recollect what our Lord says when predicting the destruction of Jerusalem: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not.” Now this literally took place; for we read that the standards of the Romans were placed, not only on the battlements and walls of Jerusalem, but in the very “holy place” itself, where the altar was, and while sacrifices were being offered. The eagles of imperial Rome, which ornamented the standards of the Romans, bore in their talons the so-called thunderbolts of the heathen god Jupiter; these standards contained also the images of the gods and of the emperors, and as such, divine honours were paid to them. To these gods and images portrayed upon the standards of Rome, planted on the altar where the cherubim, and the glory, and the mercy-seat once were, sacrifices were actually offered up by the heathen priests at the time that Titus was hailed as the emperor of the Romans, and the soldiers were present witnessing this desecration of the holy place, this over-spreading of the abomination that made desolate, this last blow that finished the polity and closed the majestic history of the most wonderful race that sun ever shone upon. “For

the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation"—that is, either the consummation of its existence, or the consummation of the period determined for its overthrow—"and that which is determined"—that amount of wrath is determined—"shall be poured upon the desolate;" and then after that Israel shall be restored.

Now, this prediction in Daniel was that which awed and irritated the Jew. Every Jew regarded Jerusalem as the most sacred spot upon the earth; the very stones of the noble temple were dear to the Jew; its very dust was sacred to him. David said (what was only the prevailing sentiment), "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning: if I prefer thee not above my chief joy, let my tongue cleave unto the roof of my mouth." It was the city of the great King; it was the place for the presence of the Most High; and to tell the Jew that his temple should be overthrown was almost equivalent to telling a Christian Gentile that God shall be dethroned and cease to reign. You can conceive, therefore, with what exasperation the Jews heard reiterated by our Lord the prophecy of their ruin; and what grounds for opposition they had to those prophets that specially predicted the desolation of the city and the sanctuary, and the overspreading of abominations which should make it utterly desolate.

This prophecy, however, of Daniel, was not the only prophecy of this kind contained in the Old Testament Scriptures: it is the repetition of prophecies that were uttered at least a thousand years before Daniel wrote. Moses, who had viewed that glorious land from Mount Nebo, who believed the bright promises that related to its future prosperity and grandeur, was yet inspired by God himself to predict its awful desolation in these words: "The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee,

until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrows of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." I need not quote from the prophecies of Malachi, nor from those of Jeremiah; all corroborate the same thing. It was literally true that the "mothers that gave suck in those days," to use the language of our Lord, felt the weight of the predicted "woe." It is literally true that the very priests that were officiating at the altar felt the vibrations of the earthquake that was undermining its great foundations preparatory to the invasion of Titus. It is perfectly true, that the high priests and others officiating at the altar, as recorded by Josephus (who was anxious to cover the shame and magnify the glory of his people), heard sounding from all the chambers of the holy place mysterious words they could not comprehend, and were unable to suppress, "Arise, let us go hence." It is true that a prophet appeared upon the walls of Jerusalem, while it was undergoing its last dread siege, and cried for a whole year, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" till, smitten down by a stone, he died, crying, "Woe to myself!" on which Titus marched into

the midst of it, and laid it utterly desolate. When Titus came into the city, even after it had been sacked, and its streets were running with the blood of its slain, and the Jews with infatuated fury were massacring each other, and women eating their firstborn, as I have shown before, when referring to the fulfilment of this prophecy; he was so struck with the splendour of that glorious fane that he even quailed before its awful majesty,—so quailed, and was so awed, that he called to his soldiers: “Whatever you destroy, spare this temple, and the holy place.” But he had scarcely said so, when an infuriated soldier, we are told by Josephus, threw a fire-brand into the midst of the holy place; and the overshadowing cherubim, and the mercy-seat, and all the glory of Israel, perished in the flames. God had said, “It shall be destroyed;” and even a Titus was unable to avert by his power what God had predicted in his infallible word.

The present state of Palestine is proof of the fulfilment of the prediction of the overspreading abomination and its utter desolation. I need not state what has been frequently recorded by historians, what is indicated in almost every page of the books of Moses, that Palestine was a land of unparalleled fertility and beauty in ancient times. It was called the land that overflowed with milk and honey; the milk indicating the number and the value of its cattle, and the honey indicating the fragrance and the number of its flowers. Grapes were so abundant in that land that they were used as we use the commonest vegetables; the mountain sides were clothed to their top with vines; it was a land fitted to be the vineyard and the granary of Asia and Europe together. But after you have read the accounts as given by Moses of its wonderful fertility, and also the predictions of its approaching desolation, on visiting that land you will find that God walks the fields of Palestine, pointing with a mysterious finger to every nook, and stone, and acre, and ruin, and asking the sceptic infidel that goes there to blaspheme, or the infidel politician that doubts its coming restoration, “Is not my word true? and is not all I prophesy, like all I promise, yea,

and amen?" It is literally true that in this land the sun has become like brass, and rent its once fertile, but now parched soil, into thousands of fissures. It is literally true that its rain has become powder and dust. The plague, the pestilence, and the famine start forth on their dread march from the very spot where the holy place and the cherubim were. Its cities are mouldering in the sun; its population has become thinner every year; tombs are traceable on almost every acre; while the remains, as noticed by historians, indicate that it was once the city of a vast and teeming population. The mystic Euphrates, which is soon to be dried up, has overspread the whole land with vast torrents of wandering Turks and plundering Arabs, the followers and professors of the religion of the false prophet. You recollect that under the sixth vial it is said, that the Euphrates should be dried up: I showed this to denote the waning or wasting of Turkish power prior to the restoration of the Jews to their own land. That river has now overspread Palestine. The bare-footed monk walks where the temple was; the muezzim cries every day from his minaret, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet." That race, scattered throughout the whole earth—the race of God's ancient people—have but to read their ancient prophets, and then visit Palestine, or read the history of its present state, to learn how truly God has spoken, and how terribly they themselves have been punished. A traveller, celebrated for his taste, and for the brilliancy of his genius—I mean Chateaubriand—writes in the following terms of the present state of Palestine (I quote his words because they are a commentary upon what God predicted): "If I should live a thousand years, I can never forget that desert which was round about Jerusalem, which seemed still as inspired with the majesty of Jehovah and the terrors of death. We travelled laboriously amid mournful regions to attain the summit of a hill at a distance before us. Arriving here, we rode for another hour upon an elevated naked plain, sown, as it were, with round masses of stone. Suddenly, at the extremity of this

plain I perceived a line of Gothic walls, flanked with square towers, enclosing apparently the roofs of some buildings. At the foot of these walls appeared a camp of Turkish cavalry [the overflowing of abomination] in their Oriental pomp. The guide instantly exclaimed, 'Behold the holy city! Behold Jerusalem!' The most extraordinary forms of objects declare it to be on all sides a country which has groaned under miracles: the burning sun—the fierce eagle—the barren fig-tree—all the poetry and all the painting of the Scriptures, are here. Every local name retains within it some mystery; every cavern speaks of futurity; each rocky height reverberates the accents of some prophecy which God himself has spoken within its walls; the wasting rivers, the cloven rocks, yawning tombs, attest the prodigy. The desert seems still stricken dumb with terror, as if it had not yet dared to break that silence which was felt when the voice of the Eternal had been heard." Such is the testimony as to its present condition of one who visited it, and who looked upon it with a poet's and a Christian's eye. We have merely to read any history of its present condition to see how completely history is an echo to the prophecies of God.

While speaking of Jerusalem's ruin, we cannot but notice that that ruin has a limit. It is to be, says the prophet, "until that determined shall be poured upon the desolate," and unto the end of the desolations so determined. We gather from this that God's anger towards Jerusalem has a limit—nay, we are certain it has, for the prophet himself, inspired by God, has declared: "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land,

wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Now it is not fair to take this prophecy from Jerusalem, and apply it the Gentile: its truths are applicable to us only as all great moral and spiritual truths are; it relates expressly to the restoration of Jerusalem; it is meant to console and awaken the Jews in the midst of their ruin; and at this moment many a Jew is sustained in his hopes, and kept peculiar and insulated from the rest of the nations of the earth, because in the records of the desolation of his ancient and glorious capital he reads the thrilling prophecy that Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and that the Lord shall be to him his everlasting light, and his God his glory.

In looking at the whole of this prophecy, I would notice, first of all, that we have here a strong evidence of the inspiration of the prophet Daniel. What he so minutely predicted has been most minutely fulfilled. The inference from that is, that that man was inspired by God who could look along the vista of 500 years, who could specify the time that should elapse till a given event, who should declare what was done by and in that event, who should proclaim what should be the consequence of that event. The ceasing of the daily sacrifice; the departure of all the remains of ancient glory from the temple; the blasting, withering, and fading of the fig-tree, that great and ancient memorial of Judah; Titus smiting it with the sword; his soldiers consuming it with the fire-brands; the modern synagogue standing up in the midst of every capital—an

artificial copy of the ancient temple, but destitute of the altar, the sacrifice, the oblation, the priesthood, are all standing and eloquent proofs, not only that God is the God of truth, but that Daniel spake, as other holy men spake of old, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

We learn, too, that the great cause of the desolation of Jerusalem and of the fulfilment of all the menaces of God upon it, was not the decree of God, but their own sins. God had predicted its ruin, but his prediction did not bring that ruin down; it was the sins of the people that paved the way for the march of the legions of Titus; it was their murdering of the Lord of glory that was the deed which consummated their crimes, which awoke the sleeping earthquakes, and made the sky above Palestine to be as brass, its rains to be as dust, its cities to be as sepulchres, and the only memorials of its faded magnificence to be tombs, wrecks, and ruin. It was sin, not God's prediction, that laid Jerusalem low. Our Saviour only echoed the ancient prophecy when he said: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" And over that great city, as over the grave of Lazarus—the scenes of the two great incidents in the history of Jesus—it is said "Jesus wept"—wept when he saw its hopeless ruin, its fading glory, its perishing people, their rejection of the Gospel, their departure and apostasy from the living God.

We learn from this, too, that great privileges abused ever bring down great judgments on the people that abuse them. Privileges do not commend us to God; they commend God to us. No people are saved because they have privileges; they are only made thereby responsible. The greater the privileges that God has given you, not therefore the greater the safety you shall have, but the greater the responsibility that rests upon you. Chorazim, Bethsaida, Tyre, and Sidon, perished by their sins; but when Jerusalem fell, it fell from a height of responsibility and privilege to which Tyre had never

reached, and therefore its fall was all but final. When an angel falls he becomes a fiend. The depth of our ruin is in the ratio of the height to which God's goodness and our privileges have elevated us. If God spared not Jerusalem, the city that he loved, when Jerusalem forsook him, God will not spare London, the city he has privileged, when London proves untrue to him. It is as applicable to the 19th century as to the age in which it was first uttered, "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Sin is disorganisation; and wherever it is introduced, there society loses all its cohesive properties, becomes a rope of sand, ready to fall asunder when the external repressive power that keeps it together is for a moment withdrawn. But let a people be leavened with real religion; let our homes be vocal with prayer, with thanksgiving and praise; let our churches be pure, steadfast, protesting against apostasy, and maintaining truth; let our pulpits resound with evangelical religion; let our people of all classes, and in all ranks, and of all degrees, from the highest to the lowest, fear God, honour his ordinances, and walk before him: then the nation will have in its bosom, if any nation can have it, the element of immortality. God never forsakes a people till that people forsake him. Nations rarely fall by external assault; it is generally by internal corruption. We need never tremble about our safety: though France should send afloat yet a mightier fleet than she has at Cherbourg, though Napoleon's military avalanches should again rush down from the Pyrenees and the Alps, though popes should send ship-loads of cardinals, our island may rest upon the waters, and smile, in conscious security, whilst our country cleaves to our country's God. But let irreligion, pantheism, popery, and infidelity, and drunkenness, and Sabbath-breaking, and all the sins that do abound—and, I fear in many quarters, increasingly abound—gain the mastery; and let protesting voices, and pleading cries, and praying hearts be still; then our palladium is gone, the shields of the Lord are removed. The least aggression will ruin the

country that has lost God; the mightiest armament shall fail to scathe it when God is recognised as its strength, its glory, its portion. Righteousness, I repeat, exalteth a nation, and sin is the ruin of any people.

We learn, too, that when sin thus runs along the streets, degrades and defiles the people universally, nothing it can attempt can save it. All the policy of imperial Rome; all the manœuvring and compromises of the priests, the scribes, and the Sadducees; all the coalitions into which the people of Jerusalem entered, were utterly unable to avert their ruin; they rather contributed to hasten its sure and certain doom, just because sin was there. So, to apply it to other nations; the arms and squadrons of Xerxes, the legions of Cæsar, the armies of Napoleon, did not save them; and the wooden walls of England will not guard us, or any other nation, from utter ruin, if we do not keep ourselves in the faith, the fear, and the hope of the Gospel. When I speak of national religion, I do not mean some transcendental view of it: one way for us to have national religion for all practical purposes is for each man to be a Christian. It is not by struggling to carry some measure in the House of Commons, however valuable it may be, that we shall make our nation Christian; it is by each man being so. One brick laid upon the ground does more to complete a building than a thousand castles built in the air. One family becoming truly and decidedly Christian is a greater contribution to the Christianity of our land than the most brilliant act of Parliament: I do not undervalue the latter; yet the days for getting such acts are ceasing, whereas the days for being Christians are multiplying. Never were men more called upon than in the present day to "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

We learn from all these predictions—to leave for a moment the immediate topic under review, and to revert to all we have been contemplating in the nine chapters of Daniel, over which I have so rapidly passed—what man is without true religion. The magi of Chaldea

showed themselves to be but fools; Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Belshazzar, the royal despots of the earth—how poor are they, how lustreless, beside the quiet grandeur of the prophet Daniel, and the three Hebrew youths that counted not their lives dear for Christ's sake! The Gospel elevates the humblest, and ennobles the highest; to the grandeur of the man it adds all the glory of the saint, and makes individuals and nations beautiful in that real and only beauty which the king's daughter alone has—the beauty of holiness, and righteousness, and truth.

We learn, too, how God rules and acts in all the affairs of men. The great image was the shadow of what all history is: a nation's dignity was merely a higher or lower place assigned it in the great image—being clay, or iron, or silver, or gold, as God might appoint. The same God that ruled in Babylon is the God that rules now. "God *is*," not God *was*; or, rather, "Jehovah is his name; God, who was, and is, and is to come."

How important must the Saviour have been felt to be by Daniel; and how important was he known to be of God, seeing that all prophecy is literally the testimony of Jesus! Daniel cannot close a great cycle in his prophecy without closing it with the exhibition of the Prince the Messiah; Isaiah's harp never rises to its noblest strains except when he tunes it to the Name, and sweeps it in the prospect of, a coming Messiah; Malachi closes the Old Testament prophecy, as Daniel closes his predictions, by giving the glad hope that the Messiah, the Sun of righteousness, was about to rise with healing under his wings. Christ is the key-note of all the songs of David, the burden of all prophecy, the alpha and the omega of the whole Bible.

We gather another lesson also,—that the same religion we have, Daniel had: he was as much a Christian as Martin Luther, Cecil, Newton, Whitfield, or any other great and distinguished Christian or minister of Christ in modern times. There never was sanctioned by God but one true religion. There are many current reli-

gions; there is and has been but one that bears the superscription and the stamp of God. There is the religion of man, the religion of the priest; but there is but one that is true—that is, the religion of God. This Christianity is as truly, if not as clearly, in the Old Testament as in the New. Isaiah was as truly an Evangelist as John; so much so, that he has been called the evangelical prophet, although that phrase is objectionable, for Jeremiah, Malachi, and Daniel were just as evangelical as Isaiah. They all proclaimed one Saviour; they all taught one sacrifice; they all built up our hopes of glory upon one great foundation, Christ Jesus. The overshadowing angels on the mercy-seat, like the Old and New Testaments, while the tips of their wings touched each other, both looked down upon one propitiatory or mercy-seat. Like the twin lips of an oracle, the old covenant and the new equally utter and announce Christ and him crucified as the great substance of the hopes of men.

And what dignity, let me add, in the next place, does this give to God's word; and what a lowly, though an important place does prophecy impart to man's history! There is something wonderfully striking in this—that the calendars of nations are the commentaries on the prophecies of God's word. Whenever the historian is wanted, Josephus steps forth from his country, and Gibbon emerges from the shadow of the Alps where he sojourned, Alison comes from the north, Hume leaves infidelity, and each sits down to write facts; Christians read the facts; and lo! they are the rebounds of prophecy, the echoes of God's ancient word; and, consciously or unconsciously, the sceptic Hume, the atheistic Gibbon, the accomplished and Christian Alison, the Jew Josephus, attest in their histories that God's word is true, and that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." So, in the same manner, everything that is now discovered, everything that daily occurs, serves more and more to show the truth of God's word. Daniel writes, two thousand years ago, that towards the end of our dispensation "many shall run

to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;" and to prove Daniel's prediction, the railway appears, and with it the mysterious whispering wire, that knits together isles and continents, so that the mother in London will yet convey messages in a few minutes to her son at Calcutta, and receive a message in reply; all spring up when the moment comes, to testify how truly the ancient prophet spake, when he said, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

In the next place, how humbling to great men are the truths embodied in the word of God! Hannibal, Cæsar, Napoleon, all the great generals and mighty captains that have successively stepped upon the stage to win splendour for their names, and glory for the armies of their country, to vindicate injured rights, to deliver oppressed nations; came forward, as they meant, to do their own behests, and lo! they are found to have been doing God's word, filling up the great outline of God's predicted and pre-written Providential government; and so Hannibal, Cæsar, Alexander, and Napoleon were but the pens that the ready writer used,—but the chisels in the hand of the Great Statuary, as he carved out in history what he had so clearly predicted in ancient prophecy. When we take our stand on prophetic ground, what composure, what quiet does it give us to see this, and be satisfied (and I am as satisfied of it as I am of my own existence), that all things are going right, that everything is evolving its appropriate issue, that all occurrences are stepping in to fulfil God's sure word, and to accomplish God's grand purposes! Do not be alarmed, my dear brother, when a leaf shakes with the wind, as if the church of Christ were about to perish. Do not suppose, when nations withdraw their endowments, and imperial crowns their shields, from the Christian church—when popery enters here, and infidelity spreads there, and divisions and exasperation abound elsewhere, that the church of Christ is about to fall. It remains; it gathers strength from the wreck; and grandeur from surrounding ruin. The fracture of the earthen vessel is only the letting forth of the inner perfume; and the noise, and

quarrels, and debates that we hear are not the overturning of the glorious fabric; they are only the settling of its sure and its everlasting foundation. Let us then acquaint ourselves with God, and with God especially as he is revealed in his word, and be at peace.

In conclusion, let me ask, Have you, my hearer, my reader, an interest in Messiah? Do you stand in him as the stand-point from which you can review all the movements of the nations of the earth? Is it well, first, with thine own soul? and if it be well there, by its being washed in that Saviour's blood, arrayed in his righteousness, trusting in his name; then be still, and know that he is God; rejoice in the hope of glory, for He in whom you trust has engraven you on the palms of his hands, and holds you in imperishable remembrance.

A P P E N D I X.*

DANIEL.

“THE predictions of things to come relate to the state of the Church in all ages: and amongst the old prophets, *Daniel* is most distinct in order of time, and easiest to be understood: and therefore in those things which relate to the last times, he must be made the key to the rest.”—*Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on Daniel.*

“The Jews do not reckon him (*Daniel*) to be a prophet; and therefore place his prophecies only among the Hagiographa: and they serve the Psalms of David after the same rate. The reason which they give for it in respect of both is, that they lived not the prophetic manner of life, but the courtly; David, in his own palace, as King of Israel, and Daniel in the palace of the King of Babylon as one of his chief counsellors and ministers in the government of that empire. And in respect of Daniel they further add, that, although he had divine revelations delivered unto him, yet it was not in the prophetic way, but by dreams and visions of the night, which they reckon to be the most imperfect manner of revelation, and below the prophetic.”—*Prideaux's Connexion.* Anno 534.

“Never were any prophecies delivered more clearly, or fulfilled more exactly, than all these prophecies of Daniel were. Porphyry, who was a great enemy of the Holy Scriptures, as well of the Old Testament as of the New, acknowledged this. And therefore, he contends, that they were historical narratives written after the facts were done, and not prophetic predictions, foretelling them to come.—This Porphyry was a learned heathen, born at Tyre, in the year of Christ 233, and there called Malchus; which name, on his going among the Greeks, he changed into that of Porphyry, that signifying the same in the Greek language which Malchus did in the Phœnician, the language then spoken at Tyre. He

* See at the end of Rev. Dr. Nolan's Warburton Lectures, and Rev. P. Miles' Lectures; to both of which I am indebted for long and useful notes.

being a bitter enemy to the Christian religion, wrote a large volume against it, containing fifteen books, whereof the twelfth was wholly against the prophecies of Daniel. Those concerning the Persian kings and the Macedonian that reigned as well in Egypt as in Asia, having been all, according to the best historians, exactly fulfilled, he could not disprove them by denying their completion; and therefore, for the overthrowing of their authority, he took the quite contrary course, and laboured to prove their truth; and from hence alleged, that being so exactly true in all particulars, they could not therefore be written by Daniel so many years before the facts were done, but by some one else under his name, who lived after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. For which purpose, he made use of the best Greek historians then extant. Such were Callinicus Sutorius, Diodorus Siculus, Hieronymus, Polybius, Posidonius, Claudius Theon, and Andronicus Alypius; and from them made evident proof that all that is written in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, was truly, in every particular, acted and done in the order as there related; and from this exactness of completion, endeavoured to infer the assertion mentioned, that these prophecies were written after the facts were done, and therefore are rather historical narratives relating to things past, than prophetic predictions, foreshowing things afterwards to come. But Jerome turns the argument upon him, and with more strength of reason infers, that this way of opposing these prophecies gives the greatest evidence of their truth, in that what the prophet foretold is hereby allowed to be so exactly fulfilled, that he seemed to unbelievers not to foretel things to come, but to relate things past. Jerome, in his Comments on Daniel, makes use of the same authors that Porphyry did; and what is in these Comments are all the remains which we now have of this work of that learned heathen, or of most of those authors which he made use of in it." *Prideaux's Connexion*. Anno 164.

PROPHECY AND HISTORY.

"Whatever is now done, was foretold: whatever is now seen, was first heard. If earthquakes swallow up cities; if islands are invaded by the sea; if foreign and domestic wars distract states; if kingdom rises up against kingdom; if there are famine, and pestilence, and slaughters in divers places; if the wild beasts of the mountains lay waste many regions; if the humble are exalted, and the lofty are laid low; if justice is rare, and iniquity abounds; if the regard for every good and wholesome discipline waxes cold; if even the times and seasons vary from their appointed order, all these have been predicted by the Providence of God. While we suffer these calamities we read of them; when we recognise them

as the objects of prophecy, the truth of the Scriptures which predict them is proved. The daily fulfilment of prophecy is, surely, a full proof of revelation. Hence, then, we have a well-founded belief in many things which are yet to come, namely, the confidence arising from our knowledge of the past, because some events, still future, were foretold at the same time with others which are past. The voice of prophecy speaks alike of each; the Scriptures record them equally; the same Spirit taught the prophets both. In the predictions, there is no distinction of time; if there be any such distinction, it is made by men; while the gradual course of time makes that present which was future, and that past which was present. How can we, then, be blamed for believing also what is predicted respecting the future, when our confidence is founded upon the fulfilment of prophecies relating to the present and the past?"—*The Apology of Tertullian*, ch. xx. Chevallier's Trans.

THE FORCE OF PROPHECY.

“Suppose that, instead of the spirit of prophecy breathing more or less in every book of Scripture, predicting events relative to a great variety of general topics, and delivering, besides, almost innumerable characteristics of the Messiah, all meeting in the person of Jesus, there had been only *ten* men in ancient times who pretended to be prophets, each of whom exhibited only *five* independent criteria as to place, government, concomitant events, doctrine taught, effects of doctrine, character, sufferings, or death; the meeting of all which, in one person, should prove the reality of their calling as prophets, and of his mission in the character they have assigned him: suppose, moreover, that all events were left to *chance* merely, and we were to compute, from the principle employed by mathematicians in the investigation of such subjects, the probability of these *fifty* independent circumstances happening *at all*. Assume that there is, according to the technical phrase, *an equal chance* for the happening or the failure of any one of the specified particulars, then the probability *against* the occurrence of all the particulars in *any* way, is that of the 50th power of 2 to unity; that is, the probability is greater than 1125,000,000,000,000 to 1, or greater than *eleven hundred and twenty-five millions of millions to one*, that all these circumstances do not turn up, even at distinct periods. This computation, however, is independent of the consideration of *time*. Let it then, be recollected further, that if any one of the specified circumstances happen, it *may* be the day after the delivery of the prophecy, or at any period from that time to the end of the world; this will so indefinitely augment the probability against the contemporaneous occurrence of merely these *fifty* circum-

stances, that it surpasses the power of numbers to express correctly the immense improbability of its taking place. Be it remembered, also, that in this calculation I have assumed the hypothesis *most* favourable to the adversaries of prophecy, and the most unfavourable possible to the well-being of the world, and the happiness of its inhabitants; namely, the hypothesis that everything is fortuitous; and it will be seen how my argument is strengthened by restoring things to their proper state. If everything were left to blind chance, it appears that the probability against the fulfilment of only fifty independent predictions in the same time, place, and individual, would be too great to express, numerically; how much greater, then, must it be, in fact, when all events are under the control of a Being of matchless wisdom, power, and goodness, who hates fraud and deception, who must especially hate it when attempted under his name and authority, who knows all that occurs in all places, and who can dissipate, 'with the breath of his mouth,' every deceiver, and all their delusions? The more we know of the prophecies, and of history, whether sacred or profane, the more we are struck with the correspondence of predictions and events; their coincidence, in hundreds of instances, is so palpably notorious, that none can deny it: every principle of reason, every result of correct computation, instituted with a view to this inquiry, is in favour of the positions maintained by Christians in all ages. Imagine these to be still doubtful, and what is there else that is stable and certain?"—*Letters of Dr. Olinthus Gregory*, Letter VI. (See *Emerson on Chances*, Prop. 3; *Wood's Algebra*, Art. 419, Chances.)

THE FOUR GREAT EMPIRES.

"It was from Daniel's prophecy, too, that the distinction first arose of the four great empires of the world, which hath been followed by most historians and chronologers in their distribution of times. These four empires, as they are the subject of this prophecy, are likewise the subject of the most celebrated pens, both in former and in later ages. The histories of these empires are the best written, and the most read of any; they are the study of the learned, and the amusement of the polite; they are of use both in schools and in senates; we learn them when we are young, and we forget them not when we are old; from hence examples, instructions, laws, and politics, are derived for all ages; and very little, in comparison, is known of other times, or of other nations."—*Bishop Newton on the Prophecies*, Diss. 13.

THE STONE.

“In an ancient book of theirs, written by R. Simeon Ben Jochai, the author interprets this stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, to be the same with him who, in Gen. xlix. 24, is called the Shepherd and Stone of Israel; as it is by Saadiah Gaon, a later writer; and in another of their writings, reckoned by them very ancient, it is said that the ninth king (for they speak of ten) shall be the King Messiah, who shall reign from one end of the world to the other, according to that passage, *the stone which smote the image*, &c. ver. 35; and in one of their ancient Midrashes, or expositions, it is interpreted of the King Messiah: and so R. Abraham Seba.”—*Dr. Gill's Commentary on Daniel ii. 34.*

CITY OF BABYLON.

“And, besides these, there were also four half-streets, which were built but of one side, as having the wall on the other. These went round the four sides of the city next the walls, and were each of them two hundred feet broad, and the rest were about one hundred and fifty. By these streets thus crossing each other, the whole city was cut out into six hundred and seventy-six squares, each of which was four furlongs and a half on every side, that is, two miles and a quarter in compass. Round these squares, on every side towards the streets, stood the houses, all built three or four stories high, and beautified with all manner of adornments towards the streets. The space within, in the middle of each square, was all void ground, employed for yards, gardens, and other such uses.”—*Prideaux. Anno 570.*

“For the further securing of the country, Nebuchadnezzar built, also, prodigious banks of brick and bitumen on each side of the river, to keep it within its channel, which were carried along from the head of the said canals down to the city, and some way below it. But the most wonderful part of the work was within the city itself; for there, on each side of the river, he built from the bottom of it a great wall, for its banks, of brick and bitumen, which was of the same thickness with the walls of the city; and, over against every street that crossed the said river, he made, on each side, a brazen gate in the said wall, and stairs leading down from it to the river, from whence the citizens used to pass by boat from one side to the other, which was the only passage they had over the river, till the bridge was built which I have above mentioned. The gates were open by day, but always shut by night. And this prodigious work was carried on, on both sides of the river, to the length of one hundred and sixty furlongs, which are

twenty miles of our measure. and therefore must have begun two miles and a half above the city, and continued down two miles and a half below it ; for through the city was no more than fifteen miles.”—*Ibid.*

“ Next this temple, on the same east side of the river, stood the old palace of the kings of Babylon, being two miles in compass. Exactly over against it, on the other side of the river, stood the new palace ; and this was that which Nebuchadnezzar built. It was four times as big as the former, as being eight miles in compass. It was surrounded with three walls, one within another, and strongly fortified, according to the way of those times.”—*Ibid.*

“ These eight towers, being as so many stories one above another, were each of them seventy-five feet high, and in them were many great rooms with arched roofs, supported by pillars. . . . The uppermost story of all was that which was most sacred. . . . Over the whole, on the top of the tower, was an observatory, by the benefit of which it was that the Babylonians advanced their skill in astronomy beyond all other nations . . . For when Alexander took Babylon, Calisthenes, the philosopher, who accompanied him thither, found they had astronomical observations for one thousand nine hundred and three years backwards from that time : which carrieth up the account as high as the one hundred and fifteenth year after the flood, which was within fifteen years after the tower of Babel was built. This account Calisthenes sent from Babylon into Greece to his master Aristotle, as Simplicius, from the authority of Porphyry, delivers it unto us in his 2nd Book De Cælo.”—*Ibid.*

“ This stood till the time of Xerxes (v.c. 479) : but he, on his return from his Grecian expedition, demolished the whole of it, and laid it all in rubbish : having first plundered it of all its immense riches, among which were several images or statues of massy gold ”—*Ibid.* See Jer. li. 44.

“ What was most wonderful in it were the hanging gardens, which were of so celebrated a name among the Greeks. They contained a square of four plethra (that is, of four hundred feet) on every side, and were carried up aloft into the air, in the manner of several large terraces, one above another, till the highest equalled the height of the walls of the city. The ascent was from terrace to terrace, by stairs ten feet wide. The whole pile was sustained by vast arches built upon arches, one above another, and strengthened by a wall, surrounding it on every side, of twenty-two feet in thickness . . . on the top of the arches were first laid large flat stones, sixteen feet long, and four broad, and over them was a layer of reed, mixed with a great quantity

of bitumen, over which were two rows of bricks, closely cemented together by plaster, and then over all were laid thick sheets of lead: and all this flooring was contrived to keep the moisture of the mould from running away down through the arches. The mould or earth laid hereon was of that depth, as to have room enough for the greatest trees to take rooting in it; and such were planted all over it in every terrace, as were also all other trees, plants, and flowers, that were proper for a garden of pleasure. In the upper terrace there was an aqueduct or engine, whereby water was drawn up out of the river, which from thence watered the whole garden."—*Ibid.*

THE SON OF MAN.

"This Son of Man the Jews themselves confess to be the promised Messias, and they take the words to signify his coming, and so far give testimony to the truth; but then they evacuate the prediction by a false interpretation, saying, that if the Jews went on in their sins, then the Messias should come in humility, according to the description in Zachary, *lowly, and riding upon an ass* (ix. 9); but if they pleased God, then he should come in glory, according to the description in the prophet Daniel, *with the clouds of heaven*: whereas these two descriptions are two several predictions, and therefore must be both fulfilled. From whence it followeth, that being *Christ* is already come, *lowly and sitting upon an ass*, therefore he shall come gloriously with the *clouds of heaven*. For if both these descriptions cannot belong to one and the same advent, as the Jews acknowledge, and both of them must be true, because equally prophetic: then must there be a double advent of the same *Messias*." "Indeed the Jews do so generally interpret this place of Daniel of the Messias, that they made it an argument to prove that the Messias is not yet come, because no man hath yet come with the clouds of heaven."—*Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Article VII.*

THE MILLENNIUM.

"That the kingdom in *Daniel* and that of 1000 years in the *Apocalypse* are one and the same kingdom, appears thus:

"First. Because they begin *ab eodem termino*, namely, at the destruction of the Fourth Beast: that in *Daniel*, when the beast (then ruling in the wicked horn) was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, *Dan. vii. 11, 22, 27.* That in the *Apocalypse*, when the beast and the false prophet (the wicked

horn in *Daniel*) were taken, and both cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone, *Apoc.* xix. 20, 21, &c.

“Secondly Because St. John begins the *Regnum* of a thousand years from the same session of judgment described in *Daniel*; as appears by his parallel expression borrowed from thence.

DANIEL says, chap. vii.

Ver. 9. *I beheld till the thrones were pitched down . . . and the judgment (i.e. judges) sat.*

22. *And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.*

And the saints possessed the kingdom; viz. with the Son of Man who came in the clouds.

ST. JOHN says, chap. xx.

Ver. 4. *I saw thrones, and they sat upon them.*

And judgment was given unto them.

And the saints lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

“Now if this be sufficiently proved, That the thousand years begin with the *day of judgment*, it will appear further out of the *Apocalypse* that the *judgment* is not consummate till they be ended: for Gog and Magog’s destruction, and the universal resurrection, is not till then: therefore the whole thousand years is included in the *day of judgment*.

“Hence it will follow, that whatsoever Scripture speaks of a *kingdom of Christ*, to be at his second appearing or at the destruction of antichrist, it must needs be the same which *Daniel* saw should be at that time, and so consequently be *the kingdom of a thousand years*, which the *Apocalypse* includes between the beginning and consummation of the great judgment.

“Ergo. that in *Luke* xvii. from verse 20 to the end.

“And that in *Luke* xix. from the 11th verse to the 15th inclusively.

“And that in *Luke* xxi. 31. *When ye see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is at hand.* See what went before, viz. *The Son of man’s coming in a cloud with power and great glory*; borrowed from *Daniel*.

“And that in *2 Tim.* iv. 1. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.*

“By these we may understand the rest; taking this for a sure ground. that this expression of [*The son of Man’s coming in the clouds of heaven*] so often inculcated in the New Testament, is taken from and hath reference to the Prophecy of *Daniel*, being no where else found in the Old Testament.”—*Mede*, Book IV. Epist. 15, page 763. See likewise Book III. page 532; also *Wintle on Dan.* vii. 14.

The following very important discussion I take from Hengstenberg :—

TRACES OF THE BOOK IN PRE-MACCABEAN TIMES.

“To the eternal arguments of the genuineness belong, lastly, the traces of the existence of our book in the pre-Maccabean times. If those traces are not of such a nature as to suffice alone for a proof of the genuineness, and to have equal weight with really important counter-arguments, yet, since such counter-arguments are nowhere to be found, they are, in connexion with all the other proofs of the genuineness, of no small importance.

“a. According to Josephus, *Arch* xi. 8, 5, the Book of Daniel was shown to Alexander the Great, and that prophecy was referred by him to himself. in which a Greek was announced as the conqueror of the Persian empire. Now, in order to enfeeble this testimony, attacks have been directed, partly against the whole narrative, partly against this particular point in it.—To judge of the former, we must previously place more exactly before us the contents of the narrative.

“During the siege of Tyre, Alexander commanded the Jewish high priest to do him homage, and send him troops and provisions. The high priest, true to the oath which he had taken to the still living Dar us, had refused this. Alexander deferred his revenge till the conclusion of the siege of Tyre and Gaza. After that, he marched against Jerusalem. The high priest is in great consternation ; public prayers and sacrifices are commanded ; after these he is tranquillised by God in a dream, and commanded to go himself, with the priests in their official habiliments, and with the rest of the people in white garments, to meet the conqueror. This is done as soon as Alexander approaches the city. The procession meets him at a place where there was a view of the city and temple. Alexander goes immediately to the high priest, embraces him, and testifies his veneration for the name of God on his mitre. To the wondering question of Parmenio, why he, to whom all others testified their veneration, honours the Jewish high priest, Alexander replies, that the homage is not rendered to the high priest, but to his God ; for that he had seen him in a vision in this very expedition, when he was yet in Macedonia ; that He had promised to undertake the leading of his army, and to give him the Persian dominion ; that this coincidence of the dream with the reality gave him a firm hope of victory. He then, attended by the high priest, and surrounded by the priests, marched into the city, sacrificed in the temple, according to the directions of the high priest, and showed great honour both to him and to the priests. Then they showed him the Book of Daniel. On his demanding that he should ask some favour for the people, the high priest asked for exemption from tribute in the seventh year, as being the fallow year. Many Jews then,

on the command of Alexander, determined to participate in the expedition. The Samaritans, under the pretext that they had affinity with the Jews, tried to obtain a share in the favours imparted to them ; but in this they did not succeed.

“ The truth of this whole account has been assailed, after the example of V. DALE (*dissert sup. Aristeam de LXX. interpret.* p 68 sqq), by several moderns, on the following grounds :—1. ‘ The circumstance that Alexander, after the conquest of Tyre, marched to Gaza, from thence back to Jerusalem, and from thence to Egypt, is chronologically false. He would then have made a useless circuit of several days. All writers, too, agree that he went immediately from Gaza to Egypt. Thus PRIDEAUX, l. c. iii. p. 115, and after him, word for word, GRIESINGER, p 33. But there is no difficulty in discovering the reason why Alexander marched first to Gaza and then to Jerusalem. Gaza would seem to him by far the more important ; the brave Persian satrap Betis had hired Arabian mercenaries, and laid up provisions in that strong city for a long siege ; the walls were very high, the siege extremely difficult (comp. ARRIAN *exp. Al.* p. 151, *ed Blancarri*). Alexander might hope that if he succeeded in taking this place the rest, including Jerusalem, would submit to him without drawing his sword, and the result showed that in this calculation he was not deceived. This advantage was certainly well worth the circuit of a few days — Moreover, this very representation of the march of Alexander, so improbable at first view, speaks in favour of the trustworthiness of Josephus. Had he not confined himself strictly to his authorities, he would certainly have placed the coming of Alexander to Jerusalem between the siege of Tyre and of Gaza. The statement of the other historical sources, that Alexander marched immediately from Gaza to Egypt, proves nothing ; it is a mere *argumentum a silentio*, founded on the omission of a diversion of some days, which is the less surprising considering the abundance of important incidents which the life of Alexander affords. Besides, it affects the opponents in like manner ; for Alexander must have been in Jerusalem, as we shall afterwards see ; but the ancient writers make him pass just as immediately from Tyre to Gaza, as from Gaza to Egypt. 2. ‘ It is not matter of history, when Josephus makes Parmenio say to Alexander, that all men offered him the προσκύνησις (τί δῆποτε, προσκυνούντων αὐτὸν πάντων, αὐτὸς προσκυνήσῃ τὸν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχιερέα). Not till a later period did Alexander think of exalting himself into a god, and demanding the προσκύνησις as an acknowledgment of his divine dignity.’ But surely nothing was more natural than for the subjects of the Persian empire to transfer to him the customary mark of honour, even without his demanding it ; and that he assumed it *willingly* may be supposed from his subsequent conduct. 3. ‘ Chaldeans are mentioned in the retinue of the king ; yet at that time they were still subject to the Persian king.’ But what hinders our

assuming that, even before the taking of Babylon, Chaldee renegades had deserted to Alexander, as Josephus seems to intimate in express terms? This may the more readily be imagined, as the Babylonians afterwards received Alexander with joy, as the restorer of their worship, to which the Persians had borne an ill will. 4. 'The dream of the high priest looks very like a fiction.' But if we set aside all supernatural operations, and suppose that the high priest only dreamed what had passed through his waking soul, or that he only gave out that he dreamed it, certainly all in the narrative that concerns the high priest's share in the affair has the highest probability. The whole contrivance was admirably suited to the character of Alexander. It could not have been forgotten by the high priest that, on the capture of Tyre, Alexander had spared all those who had taken refuge in the temple, that he had sacrificed to Hercules, had instituted a great festival in honour of him, and dedicated a Tyrian ship to him (comp. USSHER. *z. J.* 3673.) The measure which he chose, therefore, must have appeared to him the most suitable for mitigating the wrath of Alexander.

"Let us now pass on to establish the truth of the narrative by positive arguments, in which whatever else has been advanced against it will find a sufficient reply.

"In several main particulars the narrative is confirmed by express historical testimonies. ARRIAN says that Judea was not mastered by force of arms, but surrendered of its own accord (l. ii. p. 150 : *καὶ ἦν αὐτῷ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα τῆς Παλαιστίνης καλουμένης Συρίας προσεχωρηκότα ἦδη.*) The personal presence of Alexander in Judea is remarked, apart from Josephus, not only, as SCHLOSSER asserts (*Weltgesch.* i. p. 170), by the Arabian writer MAKRIZI, but also by PLINY (*hist. nat.* xii. 26), who speaks of an observation made in natural history in connexion with this event. That Jews served in the army of Alexander is reported by the cotemporary heathen writer HECATEUS ABDERITA. How great the favour of Alexander must have been towards the Jews, appears from the statement, although a false one, of the same writer (in *Jos. c. Ap.* ii. 4), that Alexander granted to the Jews the region of Samaria. The genuineness of his book has indeed been called in question by an anonymous author in EICHHORN'S *Bibl. f. bibl. Litt.* Th. 5, p. 432, sqq., who maintains that the writing was forged by some nameless Jew. But the only argument advanced for this assertion, the predilection for the Jews displayed in the fragments of Hecateus, is, as ZORN has already shown (*Hecatei Abd. fragmenta.* Alton. 1730, *ann.* p. 5), certainly not sufficient to establish it. It must be well remembered that those who have preserved to us the fragments of HECATEUS, JOSEPHUS, and EUSEBIUS, select only what was favourable to the Jews. It appears from the fragments of HECATEUS themselves, that he was an enlightened heathen, for whom, therefore, Judaism had some attractions, and who, as was often the case in those

times, had a certain leaning towards it. How few external reasons there were for suspecting the book, is clear from the fact that even HERENNIUS PIILUS, in ORIGEN *c. Celsum*. l. 1, did not venture decidedly to reject its genuineness, and that JOSEPHUS could dare, in the face of his heathen readers, boldly to appeal to its authority. What, moreover, is decisive against this assertion, is the great want of acquaintance with the older history of the Jews, which the author clearly displays. Neither a Jew nor a Jewish proselyte could relate that the Persians (instead of the Chakleans) carried away many myriads of Jews to Babylon. So gross an error, also, as that Samaria was granted to the Jews, could hardly have come from a Jew.—But the favour of Alexander towards the Jews is clear from another circumstance. After the founding of Alexandria he not only granted them the free observance of their religion and laws, but guaranteed them the same privileges in that respect as the Macedonians themselves (comp. PRIDEAUX l. c. p. 126.) But if the favour of Alexander towards the Jews is established, we may draw thence a conclusion for the truth of the whole narration. For it is correctly observed by JAIN (*Archäol.* II. i. p. 306), ‘if this principal point, the favour shown towards the Jews, be correct, there must have been some great cause for it, corresponding to the character of Alexander; and, since that assigned by Josephus is of such a nature, there is no reason to doubt of it.’ We have brought forward this passage, also, that it may be seen how correctly BLEEK has read, when he maintains, l. c. p. 184, that even JAIN is satisfied to vindicate simply the main fact, the favour shown to the Jews, as historically true.—Even the special circumstance, that the high priest in full costume, and particularly with the head-dress (ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχοντα τὴν κίθαρην κ. τ. λ.), went to meet Alexander is confirmed by a passage of JUSTIN, xi. 10—*tunc in Syriam proficiscitur, ubi obvis cum infulis multos Orientis reges habuit. Ex his pro m ritis singulorum aliis in societatem recepit, aliis regnum admittit, suffectis in loca eorum aliis regibus.*—Finally, the truth of the narrative as a whole is confirmed by other ancient Jewish writers, who agree with Josephus in the essential circumstances; compare the passages in HESS. (*Geschichte der Regenten in d. Exil.* ii. p. 37), who well deserves to be consulted on this incident.

“But that which has no express historical confirmation is recommended so strongly by its internal truth, that we cannot think of fiction in the matter. For instance, the behaviour of Alexander is so very correspondent with his historical character, that persons have only manifested their ignorance of history in trying from this point in particular to obtain arguments against the truth of the narration. Alexander had a twofold reason for his kindly behaviour towards the Jews. In the then state of things (the Persian empire was indeed weakened, but not for a long while after conquered), it would be to him of no little importance to lay under obligation to him a people who were not insignificant,

and in this way to bind them firmly to him ; and then the way in which the high priest came to meet him offered him a welcome opportunity of doing it, according to his custom of perverting religion as the means to his ends, and representing himself as a favourite of Deity. We maintain, against Hess, l. c. p. 33, that the dream of Alexander in all probability was fabricated by him. Could anything else be expected of a man who, soon afterwards, sent forward persons to bribe the priests in the temple of Jupiter Ammon to declare what he wished?—who, on the expedition against the Scythians, demanded from the seer, Aristander, when he foretold misfortune, that he should invent another prophecy promising success (ARRIAN, l. iv. p. 246)?—who, when the Chaldeans cautioned him not to go to Babylon, expressed his decided disbelief of all prophecy, by quoting the verse of Euripides :—

Μάντις δ' ἄριστος, ὅστις εἰκάζει καλῶς,

(ARRIAN, p. 476), and yet constantly inquired of the seers ? But how much the character of Alexander inclined him to such a political use of religion, may be shown by many examples. From this tendency of his, various tales originated by which his history, even in his own time, was disfigured. Thus, the account of the two ravens, who, according to the statement of Ptolemy Lagus, led the army on the expedition through the wilderness to the temple of Jupiter and back again ; or, according to Calisthenes, in Plutarch, even brought back the several stragglers to the army. Men tried by such fables to gain the favour of the king.—Alexander desired nothing more than that, on the expedition to India, certain tribes should receive him as the third son of Jupiter. (PRIDEAUX iii. p. 150) On his return from India he instituted, in imitation of Bacchus, a procession of three days. (PRID. p. 153.) In order to attain this end, he submitted to exertions and sacrifices, in comparison of which the favours conferred on the Jews are not deserving of mention. So, in order to procure for himself the advantages which the Persian kings derived from their divine honours, he undertook a tedious, difficult, and dangerous journey to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, on which he and his whole army nearly perished with thirst. He submitted humbly to the demand of the priests, that no one besides himself should enter the temple. At a time when his power was much more established, he had the temple of Belus, at Babylon, restored at immense cost.—When it is asserted that Alexander would not have condescended to sacrifice in the temple under the direction of the high priest, it seems to be forgotten that he did the very same thing under the direction of the Chaldean priest, at Babylon, in the temple of Belus ; and, indeed, his whole conduct there is very similar, in a religious point of view, to that at Jerusalem. ARRIAN SAYS, p. 196 : *ἐνθα δὴ καὶ τοῖς Χαλδαίοις ἐνέτυχε, καὶ ὅσα ἐδόκει Χαλδαίοις ἀμφὶ τὰ ἱερὰ τὰ*

ἐν Βαβυλῶνι ἔπραξε· τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τῷ Βήλῳ καθὰ ἐκεῖνοι ἐξηγοῦντο, ἔθυσεν.

“Let us now turn specially to the statement of Josephus, touching the prophecies of Daniel. Here also it may be easily shown how well it was contrived that the prophecies about himself should be laid before Alex., how extremely suitable to Alexander is the behaviour ascribed to him on that occasion. Alexander knew too well the influence which prophecy exercised on the whole world at that time, not to avail himself of this means, among others, for the establishment of his authority, and for the gratification of his vanity. He endeavoured by the voices of the seers of the most diverse nations to get himself declared the favourite of the gods, while in secret he laughed at superstition, certainly at least when the prophecies were not altogether to his mind. Plutarch remarks generally, as characteristic of him, that he always prided himself much on having prophecies in his favour (*συμφιλοτιμούμενος αἰεὶ τοῖς μαντεύμασι*). The soothsayer, Aristander, was constantly in his train; even an ordinary Syrian woman, who passed for a prophetess, was not considered by him too mean to be allowed access to him day and night (compare *ARRIAN*, p. 269); the priests of Jupiter Ammon must make him out by an oracle to be a son of their god; the Chaldean sages, on his entrance into Babylon, came to meet him in solemn procession, and he found much to transact with them.

“The objections which have been raised against the exhibition of the prophecies of Daniel to Alexander need to be hardly more than quoted to show their weakness. 1. ‘How could Alexander read a Hebrew writing? How could he make out the symbolical language? Why did he not feel himself offended at seeing himself represented as a he-goat, and his great empire as a passing show?’ All these objections rest on the false supposition, which has not the least foundation in the text of Josephus, that Alexander himself read the prophecies of Daniel. They were shown to him, and he was told their contents; and the king, careless about what was really contained in the book, caught eagerly at it, because the alleged contents were quite according to his wish, just as the Assyrians (compare *GES. zu Jes.* i. p. 946), without further inquiry, made use of the Hebrew prophecies, in which, as they might have learnt by mere hearsay, an irruption on their side was predicted as a divine judgment. As regards the image of the he-goat, it is judging quite according to our ideas in the present day, when it is asserted that it must have appeared offensive to the king; in the symbolism of the Babylonians and Persians, as we shall hereafter see, the he-goat was a very honourable symbol, and Alexander was surely familiar enough by this time with the symbolical spirit of the east not to take such a thing offensively. And, besides, just that prophecy which of all pointed most distinctly to Alexander, and the one therefore that was probably laid before him, chap. xi. 2, 3, is quite destitute of

imagery.—It is true, in the prophecies which foretel Alexander's greatness, there is at the same time predicted the speedy dismemberment of his empire after his death. But who shall say that they did not content themselves with imparting to him only just as much as would dispose him favourably towards the nation? And, supposing any one should, without reason, assume the contrary, have we not other instances in which Alexander, from among prophecies which announced both success and misfortune, joyfully appropriated the former, and allowed the others to rest in peace (comp. *ARRIAN*, p. 151)?

“2. ‘In both prophecies (viii. 21, xi. 2, 3) the express command was laid on Daniel to close them up or to seal them, and they are thus declared to be unintelligible. It must therefore be allowed that, in the time of Alexander, no one as yet could understand the meaning of these prophecies.’ This argument again is peculiar to BLEEK. It is sufficient for its refutation to remark that in the passages quoted it is not an absolute obscurity that is spoken of, but that which is only relative and partial. This is clear, if not sufficiently from the nature of the case, at least quite so from a comparison of chapter x. 1 with xii. 8. In the first passage, it is said that Daniel obtained an insight into the vision, chap. x. 12; in the second, ‘I heard it, but understood it not,’ and Daniel receives the command to seal up the vision, because it was destined for a future period. If a gross contradiction is not meant to be set up here, one is compelled to take the understanding and the non-understanding relatively.—But if this is the case, then there could not have been, at least as to those prophecies which refer to Alexander, especially at the time when they had already begun to be fulfilled, a non-understanding, since they belong to the clearest in the book. That a Greek would some day destroy the Persian empire, is declared in such explicit and direct terms that even a child must understand it, and nothing further was said to Alexander by the Jews, even according to Josephus; the personal reference to himself was his own work. But we will not linger any longer on the refutation of such an argument.

“Thus we think we have sufficiently justified the testimony of Josephus to the existence of the Book of Daniel in the time of Alexander the Great, and consequently to its genuineness, since the question can only be whether Daniel is genuine, or whether composed in the time of Ant. Epiph. Of course, if there existed any decisive grounds against the genuineness, the statement of Josephus alone would not suffice to invalidate them; but we have already seen that such is not the case. And thus it looks quite gratuitous for BLEEK, p. 185, to suppose that the Jews might easily have appealed to prophecies in relation to Alexander, and that it is merely a fiction of Josephus to say they were the prophecies of Daniel in particular.

“We add in conclusion, further, on the historical character of the whole relation of Josephus, a remark of a modern historian,

whose hostile disposition towards revealed religion and towards the chosen people, makes him discover in their history in other respects a tissue of lies and fables, and whose testimony, therefore, as that of an embittered, blinded enemy, is of peculiar weight. LEO says, in his *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte des Jüd. Volkes*, p. 290: 'The entire tale has nothing improbable in itself; armed resistance on the part of the high priest would have been folly; he might thus have peaceably gone to meet Alexander. And how readily Alexander allowed the Asiatic world to believe that he stood in near connexion with the gods of the nations which he had subdued, is known from other sources. It has been regarded as improbable that Alexander should not have hastened immediately from Gaza to Egypt; but to march from Gaza to Egypt by way of Jerusalem, was at the most a circuit of only a few days, and Judea no unimportant point in an expedition to Egypt; this mountain land must on no account be left in the rear, in the hands of enemies.'

"*b.* The dying Mattathias, 1 Macc. ii. 59, 60, exhorts his relatives, among other things, to steadfastness, by referring to the example of Daniel and his three companions: 'Ananias, Azarias, Misael, by believing, were saved out of the flame. Daniel, for his innocency, was delivered from the mouth of lions.*' Now several, as BERTHOLDI, maintain that Mattathias can have had before him here only the several tales in question, circulating independently of each other,—which assumption rests on the demonstrably incorrect hypothesis of a plurality of authors; or that he may refer to oral tradition, which is refuted by the fact, that all the other numerous examples adduced by him are borrowed, without exception, from the sacred writings. BLEEK, on the contrary (p. 183), allows that the passage is really to be regarded as a testimony to our book of Daniel, but avers that we have not here Mattathias' own words, but a discourse put into his mouth by the historian. This assertion, it is true, cannot be combated with decided certainty; but it could not be rightly considered as made out, unless we could from other sources prove the spuriousness of Daniel: and, since this is not the case, this testimony deserves always to be alleged among the arguments for the genuineness. Even supposing the correctness of BLEEK'S position, it is at least so far of importance, as it shows how firmly people were persuaded of the genuineness at a time so near the assumed origin of the Book of Daniel.—A reference to Daniel is perhaps also found in the words of Mattathias, 1 Macc. ii. 49: 'Now is pride established, and rebuke, and the time of destruction, and the wrath of indignation.† Comp. Dan. viii. 19:

* 'Ανανίας, Ἀζαρίσς, Μισαήλ πιστεύσαντες ἐσώθησαν ἐκ φλογός. Δανιήλ ἐν τῇ ἀπλότητι αὐτοῦ ἐρρύσθη ἐκ στόματος λέόντων.

† νῦν ἐστηρίχθη ὑπερηφανία καὶ ἐλεγμός καὶ καιρός καταστροφῆς καὶ ὀργῆς Θυμοῦ.

Behold I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation; for at the time appointed the end shall be.* Mat. appears to intimate that the grievous time pointed at by Daniel is now arrived.

"c. The Alexandrine translators have introduced the doctrine of guardian angels of kingdoms, which in the whole of the O. T. occurs only in Daniel, into two passages, in which so small a space of it is contained, that only a previous acquaintance with this doctrine could have led them to give this translation. In Deut. xxxii. 8, (God has defined the boundaries of the people according to the number of the children of Israel,) they translate the words לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל by, 'according to the number of the angels of God;' † in Isa. xxx. 4, the words בְּיָמֵינוּ מַלְאָכָיו וְשָׂרָיו by, 'For there are in Tanos, as princes, wicked angels.' ‡ It has, on the other hand, been objected that the LXX. might have taken the dogma thus introduced from the popular belief, which originated in their intercourse with heathen nations, and independently of the Scripture. But we saw before, how unfounded the assertion is that the Jews borrowed the doctrine of the tutelary spirits of nations from the Persians, among whom it did not at all exist; and it is to be well observed that this doctrine is by the Jews constantly founded on Daniel (comp. EISENMENGER i. p. 806. *Jo. a Lent. theologia Jud.*, p. 276.) It is true, however, that this argument can only pass for a secondary argument, since it must be allowed possible, although not probable, that the Jews derived this doctrine from gross misunderstanding of some passage of the Bible besides Daniel.

"d. More important than the two preceding is the proof now to be adduced of the existence of the Book of Daniel previously to the times of the Maccabees. Here we must begin with making good, certain presumptions, which form the groundwork of it.

"1. It is time at length to examine the assertion, which is as generally as confidently made, of a Hebrew or Aramæan original of the First Book of the Maccabees, now that we have so long and variously quoted it with its alleged arguments in our favour. This examination naturally cannot be instituted here comprehensively, and so as to exhaust the subject; yet this much, at least, may be briefly shown, that the arguments hitherto alleged for a non-Greek original are not tenable—We are reminded that ORIGEN quotes the title of the book in Hebrew (ORIG. in Eus. *H. Eccl.* vi. 25: ἐξω δὲ τούτων ἐστὶ τὰ Μακκαβαϊκά, ἄπερ ἐπιγράφεται Σάρβηθ Σάρβανη" ΕΛ.), which, it is said supposes, of course, that in his time the whole book was in existence

* ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀπαγγέλλω σοι ἃ ἔσται ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῆς ἐργῆς τοῖς νιοῖς τοῦ λαοῦ σου· ἔτι γὰρ εἰς ὥρας καιροῦ συντελείας μενεῖ.

† κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ.

‡ ὅτι εἰσὶν ἐν Τάνει ἀρχηγοὶ ἄγγελοι πονηροί.

in Hebrew or Aramæan ; that Jerome had even seen the Hebrew original (*Prol. gal : Maccabeorum primum librum Hebraicum reperit.*) But these testimonies show nothing more than that in the time of Origen and Jerome the book existed *also* in Hebrew or Aramæan ; if Origen and Jerome regarded this as the original work, that is not at all to the purpose. The Hebrew or Aramæan copy might just as well be a translation, as we possess such translations of most of such apocryphal writings as were written in Greek.—It is further alleged that in the book many expressions occur which do not receive their full explanation till they are translated back again into Hebrew. But were this argument valid, all the books of the N. T. might, with little difficulty, be proved to have had a Hebrew or Aramæan original. The occurrence of Hebraisms in *this* book, however, assuming its Greek original, is still more conceivable, if we remember that the Greek language was then much more recent and strange to the Jews. And, what is more, the very Hebraisms which have been produced as the most convincing (comp. *e.g.* ΕΙΣΗΗΘΗΣ, *Einl. in die Apokr.* p. 219, sqq.) are found in the LXX., and, as probably taken by the author from them, serve rather for proof that Greek was the language of the original. Thus, *e.g.*, for ἡτοιμάσθη ἡ βασιλεία ἐνώπιον Ἀντιόχου, i. 16. comp. 1 Sam. xx. 30, 1 Kings ii. 12, 1 Chron. xvii. 11 ; for πᾶς ὁ ἐξουσιαζόμενος τῷ νόμῳ, ii. 24, comp. Ezra ii. 68. vii. 15, &c. ; for ἀλλόφυλοι in the sense of Philistines, 1 Kings xiii. 2.—Of more importance would be the proof from *errors in translation*, if the only vouchers that have been adduced for this did not rest on insecure assumptions. Thus in chap. iv. 16, ἔτι πληροῦντες Ἰούδα ταῦτα, 'whilst Judas was saying this,' πληρόω is said to be used in a sense quite unusual, and only to be explained from the exchange of πληρῶ and πληρῶ. But here it may first be asked whether πληρόω has really the meaning ascribed to it, *to say*, and not rather that which occurs not rarely in the LXX. and in the N. T., *to complete*, *to do*. In chap. vi. 1, (ἐστὶν Ἐλυμαίς ἐν τῇ Περσίδι πόλις), we are told, such a sad error in the geography as the changing of the province Elymais into a city, can only be explained by supposing that the Greek translator, from ignorance of geography, translated the Hebrew עִירָא, as Aquila does, Dan. viii. 2, by *city*, instead of *province*. This assertion *might* have some plausibility, if there did not occur in the First Book of the Macc. in the other accounts relating to foreign geography and history, numerous and almost as great mistakes.—These are all the arguments for a non-Greek original of the book. On the contrary, among other things may be noted the following. We have above shown that the author of the First Book of the Maccabees made use of Daniel ; and that he copied, not the original, but the LXX., is shown by the frequent verbal agreement in the expressions. That the expression βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐσημώσεως is borrowed from the LXX. even BLEEK (p. 181) allows. Now, it might be objected that

several of the expressions quoted (although not by any means all; even for βδέ. τ. έρ. THEODOTION has, chap. xi. 31, βδέλυγμα ήφανισμένον) are translated in the same way by THEODOTION, and that therefore the agreement of the First Book of the Macc. with the Alexandrine version can only be accidental. But this objection is rendered invalid, if we consider that THEODOTION, not only in general, as Jerome and Epiphanius have already remarked (comp. among the moderns, e.g., DE WETTE, p. 81), but in particular in dealing with Daniel, as the most cursory comparison will prove, did not by any means give a new translation, but only retouched and improved the Alexandrine. Now, if the using of the Alexandrine version in the First Book of the Maccabees, as it lies before us, is established, is it at all likely that the alleged Greek translator introduced this agreement? Would he not have independently translated, not merely the book as a whole, but these particular passages that relate to the Book of Daniel?—Moreover, Josephus has nowhere made use of a non-Greek original; he rather follows constantly our Greek book, and, indeed, often in its very words. The Syr an translator, too, has translated from the Greek.—Lastly, there is no reason to doubt that the Chaldee copy of the First Book of the Maccabees, still existing, and edited by BARTOLOCCI, is the same that Origen and Jerome meant. This, however, may be immediately seen to be a bad and disfigured copy of our First Book of the Maccabees.

“2. It has been frequently maintained that the First Book of the Maccabees could not have been composed till after the death of John Hyrcanus, (106 B.C.), because, according to chap. xvi. 23, 24, the memoir of the life and deeds of Hyrcanus already existed as a complete whole at the time of the composition (comp. e.g., EICHHORN, p. 247, BERTHOLDT, p. 1048.) But this passage καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν λόγων Ἰωάννου—ιδού ταῦτα γέγραπται ἐπὶ βιβλίου ἡμερῶν ἀρχιερωσύνης αὐτοῦ, ἀφ' οὗ ἐγενήθη ἀρχιερεὺς μετὰ τὸν πανέρα αὐτοῦ), on the contrary, shows that the book was composed, although certainly a considerable time after the beginning of the reign of Hyrcanus, yet before the end of it,—otherwise why should the *terminus a quo* be expressly assigned, and not the *terminus ad quem*? We must make the more use of this indication, because we are compelled by the internal complexion of the book to place the time of its composition as early as possible. Ancient and modern scholars are agreed that the book, as far as regards the native accounts, possesses in a high degree the character of trustworthiness and historical fidelity. that it is distinguished in particular by an exact and correct chronology. Now, how can these marks of excellence, which appear in an especially striking light on comparison with the Second Book of the Maccabees, be otherwise explained than on the assumption that the book was written at a time comparatively near the incidents depicted in it, so that the author could write the truth if he really wished to? This assumption is the more necessary,

the more numerous were the fictions and exaggerations by which the Jewish national pride by degrees disfigured the history of the Maccabees. We can avoid it only on the hypothesis that there were older written authorities ; but this is very improbable, because the author nowhere refers to such sources, not even where, as in chap. ix. 23, we might surely expect such a reference, the more so as the historical books of the O. T., which the author is perpetually copying, are accustomed to quote their authorities. Besides, in the closing verses of the book that are adduced, there seems contained an intimation that beyond the period whose history the author described, no written records existed. For when the author closes his work with the death of Simon, and pronounces the continuation of it unnecessary because the history of Hyrcanus was to be found written elsewhere, it surely seems to follow that from the same reason he would not have written the *earlier* history, if there had already existed trustworthy earlier records respecting it.

“3. The Alexandrine version of Daniel, as appears from the foregoing remarks, must have been made before the First Book of the Maccabees, and, indeed, probably a considerable time before, since the way in which the author makes use of it seems to suppose its distribution and reception by the church in Palestine. We have a second testimony to its earlier composition in the prologue to Jesus Sirach, composed about the year 130 B.C., in which, as DE WETTE also (l. c. p. 75) is inclined to assume, the Greek translation of the entire O. T. is supposed complete.— Lastly, an indication of the time of composition is perhaps furnished us by the translation itself. In chap. x. 1, it renders the words וְרָאָה אֶת הַדָּבָר by *καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τὸ ἰσχυρὸν διανοηθήσεται τὸ πρόσταγμα*. By *τὸ πλῆθ.* *τὸ ἰσχ.* are probably intended the Jews at the time of the Maccabees, as those who, according to chap. xii. 9, 10, will receive a full insight into the vision which was partially closed up at the time it was given. But a very exact definition like this, for which there is not the slightest ground in the text, can only be explained by supposing the author to have lived in the Maccabean time itself, and observed the mighty influence exerted upon it by the prophecies of Daniel.

“Now, according to these explanations, the Alexandrine version is in any case separated by only a very small interval of time from the composition of the book itself, if we are to regard it as spurious. According to BLEEK (p. 238), chaps. i—vi. were composed during the time that the Jewish worship was abolished by Antiochus Epiphanes—very soon after the consecration of the altar of burnt-offering for heathen sacrifices ; the prophetic sections probably somewhat later, after the restoration of the Jewish worship by Judas Maccabæus, shortly before, or immediately after, the death of Antiochus Epiphanes ; the whole, therefore, within the years 167—163 B.C. But we should certainly expect that a book, whose author and translator are quite

cotemporary, or at most separated by only a very small interval of time, would be more correctly translated than all the other far older books of the O. T. ; and in like manner, too, that no traces of variation in the translation would occur, which, indeed, in a work only just come to light, are scarcely to be conceived. But now, in the present case, the very contrary is found. The translation of Daniel is the very worst of all, so bad that the ancient church rejected it—a thing that, with their high veneration for the LXX., says much—and substituted the translation of THEODOTION: comp. DE WETTE, l. c. p. 76. Gross misunderstandings of the original are so frequent on every hand, that it is not worth while to quote particular instances, especially as MICHAELIS has already, in his dissertation on this version (*Or. bibl.* iv. p. 17, sqq.) collected a sufficient quantity of them. Many times, *e.g.* x. 8, the translator gives mere words without any sense. Perhaps it will be attempted to charge this character of the translation on the Alexandrine origin of it. But, for one thing, this origin is very far from proved, since it does not follow from the composition of most parts of the LXX. at Alexandria, that they were all composed there; for another, it cannot be supposed that, with all the active intercourse between the Jews in Palestine and in Egypt, a proof of which would be furnished by the speedy transmission and immediate translation of the book, the complete understanding of it which the Jews of Palestine must have possessed in the time of the Maccabees, should have been withholden so entirely from the Alexandrines; and, finally, the fact that the Alexandrine version was in Palestine also the received one, as appears from its being taken as the basis in the First Book of the Maccabees and in the N. T., shows that Daniel was no better understood there than in Egypt.—Nor is it less true that traces are found of variations, although MICHAELIS (l. c. p. 34 sqq.) has ascribed much to that source, which can be ascribed only to a paraphrastic freedom, or to ignorance of the language, and to mistakes, on the part of the translator. Comp. *e.g.* chap. v. 21 (πλήρης τῶν ἡμερῶν, καὶ ἐνδοξος ἐν γῆρει); chap. xi. 4 (καὶ ἑτέρους διδάξει τὰῦτα,) &c.”—*Hengstenberg on Daniel*, pp. 224—240, *Edinburgh*, 1848.

THE PAPACY.

The strongest expressions I have used in describing the Papacy in the Lecture ending at page 245, are justified by the occurrences of 1850.

The head of the Apostasy has taken ecclesiastical possession of England—divided it among his creatures—appointed Cardinal Wiseman as their head and Archbishop of Westminster. Perhaps the most expressive comment on this Lecture will be found in the documents themselves.

THE PAPAL BULL.

Apostolic Letter of His Holiness Pope Pius IX., establishing an Episcopal Hierarchy in England.

“ Ad perpetuam rei memoriam.”

“ The power of governing the universal church, entrusted by our Lord Jesus Christ to the Roman pontiff, in the person of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, has maintained for centuries in the apostolic see the admirable solicitude with which it watches over the welfare of the Catholic religion in all the earth, and provides with zeal for its progress. Thus has been accomplished the design of its Divine founder, who, by establishing a chief, has in his profound wisdom ensured the safety of the church unto the uttermost time. The effect of this solicitude has been felt in most nations, and amongst these is the noble kingdom of England. History proves that since the first ages of the church, the Christian religion was carried into Great Britain, where it flourished until towards the middle of the fifth century. After the invasion of the Angles and Saxons in that island, government, as well as religion, fell into a most deplorable state. At once our most holy predecessor, Gregory the Great, sent the monk Augustine and his followers; then he created a great number of bishops, joined to them a multitude of monks and priests, brought the Anglo-Saxons to religion, and succeeded by his influence in re-establishing and extending the Catholic faith in all that country, which then began to assume the name of England. But to recall more recent facts, nothing seems more evident to us in the history of the Anglican schism of the sixteenth century than the solicitude with which the Roman pontiffs, our predecessors, succoured and supported, by all the means in their power, the Catholic religion, then exposed in that kingdom to the greatest dangers, and reduced to the last extremities. It is with this object, apart from other means, that so many efforts have been made by the Sovereign pontiffs, either by their orders or with their approbation, to keep in England men ready and devoted to the support of Catholicism; and in order that young Catholics endowed by nature might be enabled to come on to the continent, there to receive an education, and be formed with care in the study of ecclesiastical science, especially in order that, being in sacred orders, they may on their return to their country be able to support their countrymen by the ministry of their word and by the sacraments, and that they may defend and propagate true faith.

“ But the zeal of our predecessors will perhaps be more clearly admitted, as regards what they have done to give the Catholics of England pastors clothed in an episcopal character at a time when

a furious and implacable tempest had deprived them of the presence of bishops and their pastoral care. First, the apostolic letter of Gregory XV., commencing with these words, 'Ecclesia Romana,' and dated the 23d of March, 1623, shows that the Sovereign pontiff as soon as possible deputed to the government of English and Scotch Catholic bishops, William Bishop, consecrated Bishop of Chalcis, with ample faculties and powers. After the death of Bishop, Urban VIII. renewed this mission in his apostolic letter, dated January 4, 1625, addressed to Richard Smith, and conferring on him the bishopric of Chalcis, and all the powers previously resting on Bishop. It seemed subsequently, at the commencement of the reign of James II., that more favourable days were about to dawn upon the Catholic religion. Innocent XI. profited at once by this circumstance, and in 1685 he deputed John Leyburn, Bishop of Adrumed, as vicar-apostolic for all the kingdom of England. Subsequently, by another apostolic letter, dated 30th January, 1688, and commencing as follows—'Super cathedram,' he joined with Leyburn three other vicars-apostolic, bishops *in partibus*, so that all England, by the care of the apostolic nuncio in this country, Ferdinand, Archbishop of Amosia, was divided by that pontiff into four districts; that of London, the west, the centre, and the north, which at first were governed by apostolic vicars furnished with proper faculties and powers. In the accomplishment of so grave a charge, they received rules and succour either by the decisions of Benoit XIV., in his Constitution of May 30, 1753, which commences with the words, 'Apostolicum ministerium,' or by those of other pontiffs, our predecessors, and our Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. This division of all England into four apostolic vicarages lasted till the time of Gregory XVI., who, in his apostolic letter, 'Muneris apostolici,' dated July 3, 1840, considering the increase of the Catholic religion in England, and making a new ecclesiastical division of the country, doubled the number of vicarages, and confided the spiritual government of England to the vicars-apostolic in London, of the west, the east, the centre, of Lancaster, York, and the north. The little we have just said, proves clearly that our predecessors applied themselves strongly to use all the means their authority gave them to console the Church of England for its immense disgraces, and to work for its resurrection. Having before our eyes, therefore, the good example of our predecessors, and desirous, by imitating them, of fulfilling the duties of the supreme apostolate; pressed, besides, to follow the movements of our heart for that portion of the Lord's vineyard, we proposed to ourselves, from the commencement of our pontificate, to pursue a work that was so well begun, and to apply ourselves in the most serious manner to favour every day the development of the Church in this kingdom. For this reason, considering as a whole the state of Catholicism in England, reflecting on the considerable number of Catholics,

which keep still increasing, remarking that every day the obstacles are falling off which stood in the way of the extension of the Catholic religion, we have thought that the time was come when the form of ecclesiastical government should be resumed in England such as it exists, freely exists, in other nations, where no particular cause necessitates the ministry of vicars-apostolic. We have thought, that by the progress of time and things, it was no longer necessary to have the English Catholics governed by vicars-apostolic, but on the contrary, that the changes which had already been made necessitated the ordinary form of episcopal government.

“We have been confirmed in these thoughts by the desires expressed to us by the vicars-apostolic in England, as well as by numbers of the clergy and laity distinguished by virtue and rank, and by the wishes of the great majority of English Catholics. In maturing this design we have not failed to implore the aid of the Almighty and Most Gracious God, and that he would grant us grace in this weighty affair to resolve upon that which should be most suitable to augment the prosperity of the Church. We have further besought the assistance of the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and of the saints whose virtues have made England illustrious, that they would deign to obtain by their intercession with God the happy success of this enterprise. We have since commended the whole business to the grave and serious consideration of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, forming our Congregation for Propagating the Faith. Their sentiments having been found completely conformable to our own, we have resolved to sanction them, and carry them into execution. It is for this reason, after having weighed the whole matter most scrupulously, that of our own proper motion, in our certain knowledge, and in the plenitude of our apostolic power, we have resolved, and do hereby decree the re-establishment in the kingdom of England, and according to the common laws of the Church, of a hierarchy of bishops, deriving their titles from their own sees, which we constitute by the present letter in the various apostolic districts.

“To commence with the district of London, it will form two sees—to wit, that of Westminster, which we hereby elevate to be metropolitan, of archiepiscopal dignity, and that of Southwark, which we assign to it as suffragan, together with those which we proceed to indicate. The diocese of Westminster will include that portion of the aforesaid district which extends to the banks of the Thames, and comprehends the counties of Middlesex, Essex, and Hertford; that of Southwark, on the south of the Thames, will include the counties of Beds, Southampton, Surrey, Sussex, and Kent, with the Isles of Wight, Jersey, Guernsey, and others adjacent. In the northern district there will be but one episcopal see, which will take its name from the town of Haggelstown, and have for its circumscription that of the existing

district. The district of York will also be a diocese, whose capital will be the town of Beverley. In the district of Lancashire there will be two bishops, of whom one, the Bishop of Liverpool, will have for his diocese the Isle of Man, the districts of Lonsdale, Amounderness, and West Derby; and the other, the Bishop of Salford, will extend his jurisdiction over Salford, Blackburn, and Leyland. The county of Chester, though belonging to this district, will be united to another diocese. In the district of Wales two episcopal sees will be established, that of Salop and that of Merioneth and Newport united. The diocese of Salop will contain the counties of Anglesea, Carnarvon, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth, and Montgomery, to which we join the county of Chester, detached from the district of Lancaster, and that of Salop from the centre. To the diocese of the Bishop of Merioneth and Newport are assigned the counties of Brecknock, Glamorgan, Carmarthen, Pembroke, and Radnor, also the English counties of Hereford and Monmouth. In the western district we create two sees, Clifton and Plymouth; the first comprehending the counties of Gloucester, Somerset, and Wilts; the second those of Devon, Dorset, and Cornwall. The central district, from which we have detached the county of Salop, will have two episcopal sees, Nottingham and Birmingham: to the first we assign the counties of Notts, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, and Rutland; to the second the counties of Stafford, Bucks, Oxford, and Warwick. In the eastern district there will be one see, which will take its name from the town of Northampton, and retain the present circumscription of the district, except the counties of Lincoln and Rutland, which we have assigned to the diocese of Nottingham.

Thus, in the very flourishing kingdom of England there will be one single ecclesiastical province, with one archbishop and twelve suffragans, whose zeal and pastoral labours will, we hope, by the grace of God, bring new and daily increase to the power of Catholicism. For this reason we reserve to ourselves and successors the right to divide this province into several, and to increase the number of its bishoprics as new ones may be required, and in general to settle their boundaries as it may appear meet before the Lord.

“Meanwhile, we enjoy the archbishop and bishops to furnish at stated seasons reports of the state of their churches to our Congregation of the Propaganda, and not to omit informing us on all points concerning the spiritual good of their flocks. We shall continue to avail ourselves of the aid of the Congregation of the Propaganda in all that concerns the affairs of the Church in England. But in the sacred government of the clergy and people, and all which concerns the pastoral office, the archbishop and bishops of England will enjoy all the rights and faculties which bishops and archbishops can use, according to the disposition of the sacred canons and the apostolic constitutions, and they will likewise be

equally bound by all the obligations to which other bishops and archbishops are held by the common discipline of the Catholic Church.

“ Their rights and duties will not be in any case impaired by anything that is at present in vigour, whether originating in the former form of the English Church, or in the subsequent missions instituted in virtue of special constitutions, privileges, or customs, now that the same state of things no longer exists. And in order that no doubt may remain, we suppress, in the plenitude of our apostolic power, and entirely abrogate all the obligatory and juridical force of the said special constitutions, privileges, and customs, however ancient their date. The archbishop and bishops of England will thus have the integral power to regulate all that belongs to the execution of the common law, or which are left to the authority of bishops by the general discipline of the Church. As for us, most assuredly they shall never have to complain that we do not sustain them by our apostolical authority, and we shall always be happy to second their demands in all which appears calculated to promote the glory of God and the good of souls. In decreeing this restoration of the ordinary hierarchy of bishops in England, and the enjoyment of the common law of the Church, we have had principally in view the prosperity and increase of the Catholic religion in the kingdom of England ; but we have also desired to gratify the wishes of so many of our reverend brethren governing in England, under the style of vicars-apostolic, and also of a great number of our dear children of the Catholic clergy and people. Many of their ancestors presented the same prayer to our predecessors, who had begun to send vicars-apostolic to England, where no Catholic bishop could exercise the common ecclesiastical law in his own church, and who afterwards multiplied the number of vicars-apostolic, and of districts, not because religion was submitted in this country to one exceptional rule, but rather because they would prepare the foundation for the future rebuilding of the ordinary hierarchy.

“ This is why we, to whom it has been given by the grace of God to accomplish this great work, declare here that it is not in any manner in our thoughts or intentions that the bishops of England, provided with the name and rights of ordinary bishops, should be destitute of any advantages, of whatever nature they may be, which they formerly enjoyed under the title of vicars-apostolic. It would be contrary to reason to allow any act of ours performed at the earnest prayer of the English Catholics, and for the benefit of religion, to turn to their damage. Rather we cherish the firm hope that our dear children in Christ, whose alms and largesses have never been wanting to sustain in England religion, and the prelates who govern there as vicars, will exercise a still larger liberality to the bishops who are now attached by permanent bonds to the English Church, in order that they may not be deprived of temporal aid, which they will require to orna-

ment their temples and adorn the Divine service, to support the clergy and the poor, and for other ecclesiastical services. Finally, lifting the eyes to the almighty and gracious God, from whom comes our help, we supplicate him with all instance, obsecration, and action of grace, to confirm by Divine grace all that we have decreed for the good of the Church, and to give of his grace to those whose it is to execute these decrees, that they may feed the flock of God committed to their care, and that their zeal may be applied to spread the glory of his name. And, in order to obtain the most abundant succour of celestial grace, we finally invoke, as intercessors with God, the holy Mother of God, the blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, with the blessed patrons of England, and especially St. Gregory the Great. in order that the solicitude we have displayed, notwithstanding the insufficiency of our merit, to restore the episcopal sees of England, which he founded in his days with so much advantage to the Church, may likewise redound to the good of the Catholic Church. We decree that this apostolic letter shall never be taxed with subreptice or obreptice, nor be protested for default either of intention or any defect whatever, but always be made valid and firm, and hold good to all intents and purposes, notwithstanding the general apostolic edicts which have emanated from synodal, provincial, or universal councils, the special sanctions as well as the rights of former sees in England, missions apostolic, vicarages constituted in the progress of time—notwithstanding, in one word, all things contrary whatsoever. We likewise decree that all which may be done to the contrary by any one, whoever he may be, knowing or ignorant, in the name of any authority whatever, shall be without force. We decree that copies of this letter, signed by a notary-public, and sealed with the seal of an ecclesiastic, shall be everywhere received as the expression of our will.

“ Given at St. Peter’s, at Rome, under the seal of the fisherman, the 24th of September, 1850, and in the fifth year of our pontificate.

“ CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI.”

Cardinal Wiseman next issues the following pastoral letter, which was read in all the Romish Churches :—

THE RESTORATION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY.

“ Nicholas, by the Divine mercy of the Holy Roman Church, by the title of St. Pudentiana, Cardinal Priest, Archbishop of Westminster, and Administrator Apostolic of the diocese of Southwark, to the clergy, secular and regular, and the faithful of the said archdiocese and diocese.

“The great work (it says) is complete; what you have long desired and prayed for is granted. Your beloved country has received a place among the fair churches which, normally constituted, form the splendid aggregate of Catholic communion; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament, from which its light had long vanished, and begins now anew its course of regularly adjusted action round the centre of unity, the source of jurisdiction, of light, and of vigour. How wonderfully all this has been brought about—how clearly the hand of God has been shown in every step, we have not now leisure to relate; but we may hope soon to recount to you by word of mouth. In the meantime we will content ourselves with assuring you that, if the concordant voice of those venerable and most eminent counsellors to whom the Holy See commits the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs in missionary countries, if the overruling of every variety of interest and designs, to the rendering of this measure almost necessary, if the earnest prayers of our Holy Pontiff and his most sacred oblation of the Divine sacrifice, added to his own deep and earnest reflection, can form to the Catholic heart an earnest of heavenly direction, an assurance that the Spirit of truth, who guides the church, has here inspired its supreme head, we cannot desire stronger or more consoling evidence that this most important measure is from God, has his sanction and blessing, and will consequently prosper.”

Dr. Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham, was enthroned on Sunday last: Father Newman, one of the seceders from the Protestant Church, preached the sermon on the occasion, in the course of which he said—“The mystery of God’s Providence is now fulfilled, and though he did not recollect any people on earth but those of Great Britain, who having *once rejected the religion of God*, were again restored to the bosom of the Church, God had done it for them. It was wonderful in their eyes. The holy hierarchy had been restored. *The grave was opened, and Christ was coming out!*”

The Bishop of London, whose sympathy with the Bishop of Exeter’s views of baptism is so much to be regretted and deplored, seems recalled to his earliest and best conviction by this invasion, and thus writes in reply to a memorial from the Westminster Clergy:—

“Fulham, October, 23, 1850.

“Reverend and dear Brethren,—The sentiments expressed in the address which you have presented to me are in entire accordance with mine, and I am persuaded that they will be responded to by the unanimous feeling of Protestant England.

“The recent assumption of authority by the Bishop of Rome, in pretending to parcel out this country into new dioceses, and to appoint archbishops and bishops to preside over them, without the consent of the Sovereign, is a schismatical act without precedent, and one which would not be tolerated by the government of any Roman Catholic kingdom. I trust that it will not be quietly submitted to by our own.

“Hitherto, from the time of the Reformation, the Pope has been contented with providing for the spiritual superintendence of his adherents in this country, by the appointment of vicars-apostolic—bishops who took their titles as such, not from any real or pretended sees in England, but from some imaginary dioceses *in partibus infidelium*. In this there was no assumption of spiritual authority over any other of the subjects of the English Crown than those of his own communion. But the appointment of bishops to preside over new dioceses in England, constituted by a Papal brief, is virtually a denial of the legitimate authority of the British Sovereign and the English episcopate; a denial also of the validity of our orders, and an assertion of spiritual jurisdiction over the whole Christian people of the realm.

“That it is regarded in this light by the Pope’s adherents in this country is apparent from the language in which they felicitate themselves upon this arrogant attempt to stretch his authority beyond its proper limits. A journal which is generally believed to express the sentiments of a large portion of them at least, (not, I believe, of all,) points out, in the following words, the difference between the vicars-apostolic and the pretended diocesan bishops. Alluding to certain members of our Church, who are accused of a leaning towards Rome, it says:—In this act of Pope Pius IX. they have that open declaration for which they have been so long professing to look. Rome, said they, has never yet formally spoken against us. Her bishops, indeed, are sent here, not as having any local authority, but as pastors without flocks; Bishops of Tadmor in the Desert, or of the ruins of Babylon, intruding into territories which they cannot formally claim as their own. This specious argument is once for all silenced. Rome has more than spoken—she has spoken and acted. She has again divided our land into dioceses, and has placed over each a pastor, to whom all baptized persons, without exception, within that district, are openly commanded to submit themselves in all ecclesiastical matters under pain of damnation; and the Anglican sees, those ghosts of realities long passed away, are utterly ignored.’

“The advisers of the Pope have skilfully contrived so to shape this encroachment upon the rights and honour of the Crown and Church of England, that his nominees to imaginary dioceses will not actually offend against the letter of the law by assuming the titles which he has pretended to confer upon them; but that it is contrary to the spirit of the law there can be no doubt. As little

doubt can there be that it is intended as an insult to the Sovereign and the Church of this country.

“With respect to the conduct proper to be pursued by you on this occasion, it ought, in my opinion, to be temperate and charitable, but firm and uncompromising.

“You will do well to call the attention of your people to the real purport of this open assault upon our reformed church; and to take measures for petitioning the Legislature to carry out the principle of the statute which forbids all persons, other than the persons authorized by law, to assume or use the name, style, or title of any archbishop of any province, bishop of any bishopric, or dean of any deanery in England or Ireland, by extending the prohibition to any *pretended* diocese or deaneries in these realms.

“It is possible that such prohibitions might not have the effect of preventing the assumption of titles by the Papal bishops, when dealing with their own adherents: but it would make the assumption unlawful, and it would mark the determination of the people of this country not to permit any foreign prelate to exercise spiritual jurisdiction over them.

“But there are other duties besides those of protesting and petitioning, the performance of which seems to be specially required of us by the present emergency. Unwilling as I am to encourage controversial preaching, I must say that we are driven to have recourse to it by this attempted usurpation of authority on the part of the Bishop of Rome, and by the activity and subtlety of his emissaries in all parts of the kingdom. We are surely called upon for a more than ordinary measure of watchfulness and diligence in fulfilling the promise which we gave when we were admitted to the priesthood, ‘to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word.’

“Let us be careful as well in our public ministrations as in our private monitions and exhortations, to refrain from doing or saying anything which may seem to indicate a wish to make the slightest approach to a church which, far from manifesting a desire to lay aside any of the errors and superstitions which compelled us to separate from it, is now reasserting them with a degree of boldness unknown since the Reformation: is adding new *credenda* to its articles of faith, and is undisguisedly teaching its members the duty of worshipping the creature with the worship due only to the Creator.

“After all, I am much inclined to believe that in having recourse to the extreme measure which has called forth your address, the Court of Rome has been ill-advised as regards the extension of its influence in this country, and that it has taken a false step. That step will, I am convinced, tend to strengthen the Protestant feeling of the people at large, and will cause some persons to hesitate and draw back who are disposed to make concessions to Rome, under a mistaken impression that she has

debated somewhat of her ancient pretensions, and that a union of the two churches might possibly be effected without the sacrificing of any fundamental principle. Hardly anything could more effectually dispel that illusion than the recent proceeding of the Roman Pontiff. He virtually condemns and excommunicates the whole English Church, Sovereign, bishops, clergy, and laity, and shuts the door against every scheme of comprehension save that which should take for its basis an entire and unconditional submission to the spiritual authority of the Bishop of Rome.

“That it may please the Divine Head of the Church, who is the true centre of unity and the only Infallible Judge, to guide and strengthen us in these days of rebuke and trial, to open our eyes to the dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions, and to unite us in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, is the earnest prayer,

“Reverend and dear Brethren,

“Of your affectionate friend and Bishop,

(Signed) “C. J. LONDON.”

“To the Rev. the Clergy of the City and
Liberties of Westminster.”

Without making any remarks on the measure of 1829, that altered so materially the position of Roman Catholics in England, it is not uninteresting to recall to recollection the words of Lord Eldon, addressed to the House of Lords on that occasion.

“I know that sooner or later this bill will overturn the aristocracy and the monarchy. What I have stated is my notion of the danger to the establishments. Have they not Roman Catholic archbishops for every Protestant archbishop? Roman Catholic deans for every Protestant dean? Did not the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics dispute against Henry VIII. in defence of the power of the pope? And, in Mary’s time, were not the laws affecting the Roman Catholics repealed, not by the authority of parliament, but through the influence of the legate of the pope? And, even though you suppress these Roman Catholics who utter those seditious, treasonable, abominable, and detestable speeches, others will arise who will utter speeches more treasonable, more abominable, and more detestable. No sincere Roman Catholic could, or did look for less than a Roman Catholic king, and a Roman Catholic parliament. Their lordships might flatter themselves that the dangers he had anticipated were visionary, and God forbid that he should say that those who voted for the third reading of the bill will not have done so, conscientiously believing that no danger exists, or can be apprehended from it. But, in so voting, they had not that knowledge of the danger in which

they were placing the great, the paramount interests of this Protestant state; they had not that knowledge of its true interests and situation which they ought to have. Those with whom we are dealing are too wary to apprise you, by any insidious conduct, of the danger to which you are exposed. When (said the noble earl, in a tone peculiarly solemn and impressive)—when those dangers shall have arrived, I shall have been consigned to the urn, the sepulchre, and mortality; but that they will arrive, I have no more doubt than that I yet continue to exist. You hear the words of a man who will soon be called to his great account. God forbid therefore, that I should raise my warning voice did I not deem this measure a breach of every notion that I have of a civil contract—a breach of every article of the constitution, and contrary to the spirit of those oaths which I have taken to my King and to that constitution. Pardon, my lords, a man far advanced in years, who is willing to give up his existence to avert the dangers with which all he loves, all he reveres, are threatened. I solemnly declare that I had rather not be living to-morrow morning, than, on awaking, find that I had consented to this measure. Believing it as I do, after all the consideration which I have given it, to be an abrogation of all those laws which I deem to be necessary to the safety of the Church—a violation of those laws which I hold to be as necessary to the preservation of the Throne as of the Church, and as indispensable to the existence of the Lords and Commons of this realm as to that of the King and of our holy religion;—feeling all this, I repeat, that I would rather cease to exist, than upon awaking to-morrow morning, find that I had consented to a measure fraught with evils so imminent and so deadly, and of which, had I not solemnly expressed this my humble but firm conviction, I should have been acting the part of a traitor to my country, my Sovereign, and my God.”

LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S LETTER.

One of the redeeming signs of the times is the following noble letter from the Prime Minister of England. It is as much the exponent of his own feelings, I doubt not, as it is the evidence of the depth and strength of the current of indignation that has set in against the daring intrusion of the “Little Horn.”

In all probability the steps taken by Pius IX., so much in advance of our expectations, will hasten his approaching ruin.

“*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat,*” seems an axiom singularly applicable here.

The papal invasion is worth having, for the sake of the hidden Protestantism it has manifested, and the dormant feeling which it has awakened.

“ TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF DURHAM.

“ My dear Lord,—I agree with you in considering ‘ the late aggression of the Pope upon our Protestantism ’ as ‘ insolent and insidious, ’ and I therefore feel as indignant as you can do upon the subject.

“ I not only promoted to the utmost of my power the claims of the Roman Catholics to all civil rights, but I thought it right, and even desirable, that the ecclesiastical system of the Roman Catholics should be the means of giving instruction to the numerous Irish immigrants in London and elsewhere, who without such help would have been left in heathen ignorance.

“ This might have been done, however, without any such innovation as that which we have now seen.

“ It is impossible to confound the recent measures of the Pope with the division of Scotland into dioceses by the Episcopal Church, or the arrangement of districts in England by the Wesleyan Conference.

“ There is an assumption of power in all the documents which have come from Rome—a pretension to supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen’s supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation, as asserted even in Roman Catholic times.

“ I confess, however, that my alarm is not equal to my indignation.

“ Even if it shall appear that the ministers and servants of the Pope in this country have not transgressed the law, I feel persuaded that we are strong enough to repel any outward attacks. The liberty of Protestantism has been enjoyed too long in England to allow of any successful attempt to impose a foreign yoke upon our minds and consciences. No foreign prince or potentate will be permitted to fasten his fetters upon a nation which has so long and so nobly vindicated its right to freedom of opinion, civil, political, and religious.

“ Upon this subject, then, I will only say that the present state of the law shall be carefully examined, and the propriety of adopting any proceedings with reference to the present assumptions of power deliberately considered.

“ There is a danger, however, which alarms me much more than any aggression of a foreign sovereign.

“ Clergymen of our own Church, who have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, and acknowledged in explicit terms the Queen’s supremacy, have been the most forward in leading their flocks, ‘ step by step, to the very verge of the precipice. ’ The honour paid to saints, the claim of infallibility for the Church, the superstitious use of the sign of the cross, the muttering of the Liturgy so as to disguise the language in which it is written, the recommendation of auricular confession, and the administration of

penance and absolution—all these things are pointed out by clergymen of the Church of England as worthy of adoption, and are now openly reprehended by the Bishop of London in his Charge to the clergy of his diocese.

“What, then, is the danger to be apprehended from a foreign prince of no great power, compared to the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the Church of England herself?

“I have little hope that the propounders and framers of these innovations will desist from their insidious course. But I rely with confidence on the people of England, and I will not bate a jot of heart or hope, so long as the glorious principles and the immortal martyrs of the Reformation shall be held in reverence by the great mass of a nation which looks with contempt on the mummeries of superstition, and with scorn at the laborious endeavours which are now making to confine the intellect and enslave the soul.

“I remain, with great respect, &c.

“J. RUSSELL.”

“*Downing-street, Nov. 4.*”

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