

The outward enemy is not the most difficult opponent. The heart, when it becomes discouraged, is the most troublesome of all things. When hope fails and the spirit loses its faith, then the most severe trial is on.

Our soul loatheth this light bread, v. 5. The children of Israel were epicures, and their successors are very numerous. Murmurs about food fill many a home. If all the complaints against the fare provided by house-keepers and by the keepers of hotels, restaurants, etc., are to be repeated from the housetop at some future date, then what a terrific confusion there will be. Let us not add to this confusion by our complaints. There was the making of heroes in the rule of restraint of former days laid upon children, that they were to eat their food in silence. The apostle taught his children to eat what was set before them, "asking no questions for conscience' sake," 1 Cor. 10 : 27. It is wonderful how people think it their duty to ask questions concerning their food. Life is more than meat. If we do not like what is set before us, let us at heart be kind enough to say nothing about it. Cooking, like everything else of importance, is no easy work and demands our respect.

The Lord sent fiery serpents, v. 6. The sin of complaint is a serious one, and receives its due punishment. God feels our indifference, and is troubled at our discontent. He hath made things very good ; and sometimes the reason why He takes away blessings from people, is because they have failed to appreciate them.

Moses made a fiery serpent, v. 8. This image was a picture of their trouble, and the Israelite might say, What ! another serpent ! are there not enough already ? When we turn for the interpretation of this passage in the New Testament, we find that Jesus takes this brazen serpent to be a type of His own death. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up," John 3 : 14. The crucifixion of Jesus is a revelation of the sinfulness of the race ; for in it we behold the penalty that awaited us. The crucifixion must be to many an offence and a stumbling-block, for it tells of the misery which has befallen us. The story of Calvary is an assurance that a great price had to be paid, that a crushing burden rested upon the world.

A serpent of brass, v. 9. The crucifixion of Christ is the reality of which the serpent is a type. Sin is rendered powerless. He died that we might live. "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin," 2 Cor. 5 : 21. The cross is the crowning proof that God is ready to forgive us, since in it we find the pledge of heaven that our transgressions are forgiven. There never has been any other power like the cross to rescue the fallen, to inspire the weak and to save sinners.

When he beheld, he lived, v. 9. Only those who looked were saved. There was life for a look. So also only those who by faith look to Jesus can be saved. The cross is powerful only over those who, by love and obedience, yield to the claim of Jesus.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Those who are making progress in righteousness are sure to meet with enemies. v. 1.

If it is right to do a thing, it is right to pledge ourselves to do it. v. 2.

When man does his part, God is sure to do His. v. 3.

The remedy for discouragement is a fuller knowledge of God. v. 4.

Complaining about circumstances is really murmuring against God. v. 5.

Pain is God's warning against peril. v. 6.

Repentance has a forward as well as a backward look. v. 7.

To know oneself diseased is half the cure. v. 7.

Christ is the only cure for the sin of the world. v. 8.

It is faith and not form that saves. v. 9.

There are, after all, but two explanations of human life—Father and Fate, and there is only the difference of two letters there. If there is no loving Father, why should we complain ? We might as well save our breath. Let us be sensible. There is no use beating our sore heads against stone walls. "What are you going to do about