

if he were to *seal* it up and to *sew* it so as to keep it against the day of wrath.

#### DOCTRINE.

Life is short. James i. 9-11; 1 Peter i. 23-25, &c. The young should especially be impressed with this great truth, that it may lead to the due improvement of every hour and day of life.

#### SECOND SABRATH.

SUBJECT: *Sedition of Miriam and Aaron*.—Numbers xii.

It was through the influence of Zipporah's relatives that the recent change had been made in the government by the appointment of the seventy elders. The change had probably lessened the influence of Miriam and Aaron, and hence their irritation against the wife of Moses. Or, perhaps, Zipporah was dead and Moses had married a "Cushite," a stranger from Ethiopia. The Israelites were jealous of foreigners. Miriam was leader in the sedition. From V. 2, it seems probable that the Lord had on some occasion "spoken by" Aaron and Miriam. See Exod. iv. 15, and xv. 20.

V. 5.—On this occasion the Lord did not permit Aaron to enter into the tabernacle on account of his great sin.

Vv. 6, 7.—Show that the privileges accorded to Moses were greater than those conferred on any other. "All mine house," that is the nation of Israel. Moses was placed over them, and consequently over his brother and sister.

V. 8.—"*Mouth to mouth*"—immediately, not by dreams or visions, or by angelic messengers. Apparently, plainly, clearly, surely. (This word is now generally used to signify in appearance only.) *Similitude*, see Exod. xxxiii. 20. God in His essence is invisible. Read the last clause thus: "And not in dark speeches and in a figure shall he behold the Lord." See Deut. iv. 15.

V. 9.—*Departed*—the pillar of cloud was removed from the door of the tabernacle.

V. 10.—*White as snow*—the leprosy was of the most virulent type. Aaron "looked at her," officially as priest, and he had to declare her unclean. He saw his own sin and folly in her punishment, which was terrible.

V. 14.—The Jews and other eastern people have an intense abhorrence of the disgusting habit of spitting, and for a parent to express his displeasure by spitting on his child, or even on the ground in presence of the child, led to the exclusion of the child as "unclean."

#### LESSONS.

First note the danger of rebelling against

God, if it is so great a sin to rebel against His servants.

2. Meek as Moses was his meekness failed, and he was often very severely tried. The best of men are often accused unjustly and treated harshly, even by those who should be first to sustain and help them.

3. The Lord interferes on behalf of His servants and their vindication shall be complete.

4. God's people should beware of quarrelling among themselves. Excuses can easily be found; pleas will offer if we seek them. But they will be no better than the miserable plea of Miriam and Aaron against Moses.

5. Leprosy is a symbol of sin. Loathsome as it is, sin is still more horrible. God can cleanse us from the one and the other.

6. We should humbly confess our sins after the example of Aaron.

#### DOCTRINE.

Sin of resisting God's commands. Deut. viii. 20; 1 Sam. xv. 22; Deut. xi. 28.

#### THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *The rebellion of Korah*.—Num. xvi. 23-36.

Here was a most formidable rebellion against Moses—well organized, boldly proclaimed and persisted in. All the rebel leaders had plausible excuses for the course they were pursuing. From V. 20 it would appear that the congregation generally sympathized with the rebels, and the Lord threatened to consume them. But Moses intercedes for his foes, and God hears and answers.

Vv. 24-27.—The elders supported Moses in his appeal to the people to separate themselves from the rebels, and the people obeyed. The rebels continued to harden their hearts. They daringly stood in the doors of their tents.

Vv. 28-34.—The Lord suddenly sent an earthquake, which destroyed the rebels.

V. 35.—Korah aspired to the priesthood, and now a fire from the Lord destroyed him and his followers.

#### LESSONS.

Here we have an awful example of the danger of rebelling against God, and those whom He sets over us.

1. We should separate ourselves as far as possible from the communion of daring sinners. Christ mingled with sinners to do them good. In this we should follow His example, but we should never go with them to strengthen their hands in sin.

2. All sin is rebellion against God's authority, and they who refuse to repent must go down into the pit.