

cesters were offering human sacrifices to hideous idols theirs were singing the psalms of David. **Were never in bondage.** This was not true of their race, which had been frequently subjugated and put in bondage; and yet they had something to boast of on the line of personal liberty. The Hebrew law forbade the permanent enslavement of a Hebrew. If sold, he was to go free at the year of release, which came once in seven years. And even among the Gentiles Jews were rarely found as slaves, for they were generally ransomed by their fellow Jews. (4) *But many a man who boasts of his freedom is a slave.*

**34. Verily, verily.** "Amen, amen," words giving emphasis to a solemn utterance. **Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.** Literally, *the slave.* He who leads a life of sin is Satan's bond-servant. One man will say, "I can't help drinking;" another, "You must excuse my temper, I can't control it;" another, "I can't keep from swearing." These men confess that they are slaves; others are conscious of slavery who will not confess it; and still others are slaves who do not know it. (5) *The Christian enjoys the only real liberty.*

**35. The servant abideth not.** Those who heard Christ's words would readily understand the reference here made to Ishmael, the child of the slave-woman, and Isaac, the son of Sarah (Gen. 21). The slave is in the house, but it is not his place, while the son is there by right. (6) *Those who are slaves of sin have no rights in the Father's home.* **But the Son abideth ever.** This "Son" should not begin with a capital letter; but refers to all the children of God. Unregenerate sinners are slaves, Christians are sons and heirs.

**36. If the Son.** Here the capital S is correctly placed: the Son of God alone can give freedom to slaves in sin, for he has a power greater than that of the master who enslaved them. **Shall make you free.** Christ sets men free from the penalty of sin by pardon, and from the power of sin by sanctification.

**37. I know that ye are Abraham's seed.** He knew wherein they were the children of Abra-

ham, by natural birth, and not in their character. **Ye seek to kill me.** The very Redeemer whose coming Abraham foresaw they were now striving to murder, and in half a year afterward they nailed him to the cross. **My word hath no place.** The teachings of Jesus were received by the ear, but were not rightly interpreted in their hearts, and therefore did not influence their character.

**38. I speak that which I have seen.** The truths which Jesus gave to men he held with a clearer perception than we can, even after the divinest illumination. **My Father . . . your father.** By contrasting his own character, words, and life with theirs our Lord would show these men whence they sprang.

**44. Ye are of your father the devil.** They showed the spirit of Satan by their opposition to the truth and their murderous desires toward Christ. Our Lord evidently believed in a personal devil. **The lusts of your father.** The low and fleshly appetites. **Ye will do.** "Ye will to do." **He was a murderer from the beginning.** Satan has always striven to destroy all that is good, and these men—his children—sought to destroy the only incarnation of goodness the world had ever seen. (7) *Those who are the children of Satan must share his home and destiny.*

**45, 46, 47. Which of you convinceth.** Rather, "convicteth me of sin?" as in Rev. Ver. His meaning in these two verses is, "Either I am speaking falsehood or truth. If I am speaking falsehood, show me the wrong; if I am speaking truth, believe me." The question put nearly twenty centuries ago still remains unanswered, for not one sin has ever been laid to Jesus Christ. **He that is of God.** He presses his logic home upon them: "If I speak the truth, and you do not accept my words, the fact shows that you are not of God, but are of Satan." (8) *There are but two parties in the moral world, God's party and Satan's party; to which do you belong?*

### CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

BY REV. JAMES HOPE MOULTON, M.A.

The present discourse, in which the contest between our Lord and the "Jews" reaches its sharpest phase, is a continuation of the argument of chap. 7, a fact which the interpolated narrative opening this chapter tends to obscure. The boldness of his invective against the leaders of Judaism had winged with irresistible power the lofty declarations he had made concerning his own person and office. Many of the multitude who listened—perhaps many of the hostile "Jews" themselves—had been deeply convinced, and had laid their hearts at his feet in obedient faith. Be-

tween them and his irreclaimable enemies stood a third class who had accepted his words, but were too fast bound to their party prejudice to be able yet to yield entirely to his claims. To these Jesus addresses the gracious promise of verses 31 and 32. Their answer plainly showed that they accepted his Messiahship in their own sense of the title only, and as he penetrates their hearts more deeply we hear him using language of terrible severity—language which would be utterly unjustifiable in any mere man. The good Physician uses here the most searching and painful remedies because he