

The grounds on which these duties towards God and men are based, like the duties themselves, are of universal application. In the opening words of the prophecy, Jehovah reminds Israel of the great love wherewith He had loved them, as shown in His dealings with them. This has been fitly called the keynote of the book. Even His chastisements were prompted by His loving interest in their welfare. It is said in Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." This exhaustless, all-embracing love of God for His creatures claims grateful love in return; and heightens the guilt of the sins that are committed against such infinite fatherly goodness.

Another ground of God's claim to obedience, presented by the prophet, is His relationship to them as Father and Master. They had withheld the honor due to Him as a Father, and the fear and obedience due to Him as Master. In this appeal the great truth is suggested, that all moral obligations arise out of the relations of being. Not only does duty to God spring from our relations to Him, but that we have all one Father is given as a reason for brotherly kindness and justice between men. The denial of the divine fatherhood dissolves the bonds and obligations of human brotherhood to those who accept such denial. One class of theologians represent God almost solely as a sovereign Ruler; and it is sometimes falsely said, that this is the only conception of God presented in the Old Testament. Another class speak of the loving fatherhood of God, in a way that virtually excludes the idea of justice and moral government. In this prophecy both these attributes are clearly set forth; and any theology that does not fully recognize both is gravely defective.

THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH FORETOLD.

I can only refer very briefly to that part of Malachi's prophecy which has attracted the greatest attention, and is most prominent in the thoughts of Christians, when Malachi is named. I mean the sublime prophecy of the coming of the Lord, to be preceded by the coming of Elijah the prophet, who is to prepare the way before Him. No doubt, one reason