

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

SCRIPTURE CONFIRMATION.

The Biblical Archaeological Society of England has recently brought to light another confirmation of the accuracy of the Book of Daniel which it may be well to notice as a satisfactory reply to those infidels who foolishly assert that it was written by some one who lived not long before the Christian era; as if it were possible for a Jew of that age to relate history involving Babylonian customs of the time of Nebuchadnezzar or Darius, without being liable to fall into grievous errors:

The Book of Daniel records the punishments common at Babylon, of such extreme cruelty, such as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being cast into a burning fiery furnace, and Daniel and his enemies into a den of lions, that some have been ready to deny the authenticity of Daniel on this ground alone, forgetful or ignorant of the well known fact that Rome, whether Pagan or Papal, has been guilty of the very same crimes towards faithful Christians who "loved not their lives unto the death," and for which she will one day be deservedly and finally punished. In the days of Assurbanipal, son of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria, we have the contemporary evidence that both these punishments were in use at Babylon a few years before the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Saulmugina, brother of Assurbanipal, King of Assyria, was made by his relative King of Babylon, where he reigned prosperously for several years. Afterwards, for some unknown reason, he ungratefully rebelled against his elder brother, but after a severe contest was defeated and taken prisoner. The Assyrian monarchs appear to have been always animated with an implacable spirit of revenge. Hence we are not surprised at finding among the inscriptions containing the annals of Assurbanipal one of this ominous nature, which reminds us of a somewhat similar event in British history in the closing scenes of the great Plantagenet dynasty: "I ordered Saulmugina, my rebellious brother, who made war with me, to be cast into a fiery burning furnace." Of Saulmugina's followers it is related that many perished with him in the flames, and those who escaped, but were subsequently caught, it is said of them: "The rest of the people I threw alive among the bulls and lions, as Sennacherib, my grandfather, used to throw men among them."

If we turn to another subject we have equally sure evidence of the Sabbath rest, as practised among the early Babylonians. The cuneiform text of the first and fifth of the Creation Tablets published by the late George Smith, which belong to the reign of Assurbanipal, but which were copies of earlier inscriptions supposed to be as old as B.C. 3000, after speaking of the upper region before it was called heaven, and the lower region before it was called earth, and the abyss of Hades, and the chaos of waters, proceeds as follows: "God appointed the moon to rule the night, and to wander through the night until the dawn of day. Every month without fail God made holy assembly-days. In the beginning of each month, at the rising of the night, the moon shot forth its horns to illuminate the heavens. On the seventh day God appointed a holy day, and commanded to cease from all business. Then arose the sun in the horizon of heaven."

The reign of this same King of Assyria is proved by some of the recently discovered inscriptions in the Isle of Cyprus, which are of peculiar interest to us at the present time. These inscriptions being in characters entirely different from the cuneiform, presented at first a great difficulty in their decipherment, but they have now been solved by the skill of Oriental scholars, on this occasion chiefly Englishmen. An inscription on the gold armlets found at Kurion, in Cyprus, reveals the name of Ithyander, King of the Island, who rendered homage to Assurbanipal B.C. 620, during his march against Egypt, and only a few years before the termination of the war in which the pious Josiah, King of Judah, lost his life, as the Book of Kings relates it: "In his days Pharaoh-nechoh, King of Egypt, went up against the King of Assyria to the river Euphrates, and King Josiah went against him, and he slew him at Megiddo when he had seen him." We have also some Babylonian cylinders discovered by General di Cesnola at the same place in Cyprus, and inscribed with cuneiform characters in the Accadian tongue, though the proper names are all

Semitic; some of these are supposed to be of the time of Esarhaddon's reign, the eighth century B.C., while others belong to the reign of Naram Sin, King of Babylon, son and successor of Sargon I., who flourished before the sixteenth century, B.C. The following inscription belongs to the former period, and seems to display evidence of Egyptian influence, as a priest is represented holding up his hands with two sphinxes above him. The inscription reads thus: "The moon god, the good —, the Judge of the world, the fortune completer of heaven and earth, the giver of life to the gods. O, Master, who givest thy precious head, thou Prince of the dead." These are remarkable sentences for a heathen seven centuries before the Saviour of the world rose from the grave which could not contain Him, thus proving Himself alike Lord of the living and Prince of the dead. It is interesting to remember that 1000 years before this inscription was engraven, when we are brought back to the time of Moses, the inhabitants of the Isle of Cyprus are represented on the famous historical tomb at Thebes, as paying homage and tribute to Thothmes III., the builder of our recent arrival on the Thames embankment, which two centuries ago was known at Alexandria as "Pharaoh's Obelisk," but which latterly has borne the misleading title of "Cleopatra's Needle." —*Record, London.*

IMMORTALITY.

"If a man die shall he live again."—JON. xiv. 14.

"If a man die shall he live?" is a question that has its thrilling interest long before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness shed forth, more clearly, life and immortality through the Gospel. Man, unaided by Divine Revelation, perceiving that all things are subject to decay, beholding his fellow man going down to the tomb, feeling the burden of age and infirmity pressing him to earth, must have concluded that he, too, would sink into the chambers of eternal night. How dismal and dreadful must death have appeared to him! His existence beyond the close of life never drew forth a single emotion in his own bosom, and not a solitary ray of immortality ever illumined his darkened mind.

Reason has exhausted her powers and failed to answer the question. She has examined the philosophy of death, but the prerogative of death ceases when vitality has fled. Death opens the gate, but cannot tell whether eternal night or eternal life lies beyond. Death hurries mortals from earth, but brings no one back to report the condition of the dead. Reason has entered the mental chambers of man, examined their properties, made known their wonderful powers, but whether that mind possesses one spark of immortality, she is unable to discover. Every avenue of the mind that could be opened, she has entered; every possible property she has diligently examined; every tendency of the mind she has followed; she has gone down with man to the very gates of death, but has never, and never can, raise the veil that hides immortality from man.

Revelation, alone, has satisfactorily answered the question. Revelation affirms that man shall live, that there is another world to which we are fast hastening; that beyond the narrow stream which divides that land from this, he has an eternal existence; that death is nothing more than a separation of soul and body. Revelation has raised the veil of futurity and opened to man's mental vision a world of inexpressible happiness, a world of light and love. It is a voice from eternity, answering the dark and perplexing question, revealing a future existence, holding forth exciting hopes, and assuring man that if he die he shall live again.

Here, on the shores of time, we find man. We know him as a compound being. He is a soul incarcerated. He is mortal, yet he possesses the principle of immortality; he is corruption, yet dissolution and worms can never destroy his soul: he exists in time, yet eternal duration cannot surpass him. To affirm that this existence is nothing more than a vague idea, a delusive fancy, a mere phantom, is to deny every sense our Creator has given us, and the express declaration of His revealed will. Ten thousand objects teach the existence of man. It is whispered to him in almost every breeze, he feels it in his daily intercourse with man, and he is as certain of it, as if it were written in indelible characters on the tablets of his soul. Man exists not only in time, but has commenced his eternal existence.

Existence is a solemn trust. Every man is invested with this trust. Omnipotence alone can destroy it. Existence, therefore, must go on. Every moment it is ripening for its eternal state; every step it is gathering fearful responsibilities; every affection and emotion of the soul is storing up treasures for its weal or woe; every act has written in burning characters its happiness or misery. If man commits suicide he only hastens the dreadful consummation. Death ends not existence, but confirms it, makes it doubly sure, continues it without the possibility of perishing, sets the seal and settles the destiny forever.

There is a spark of divinity in man, that exists not in any other being on earth. It is naught else than the breath of the Almighty. Age and experience only expand it, knowledge and truth beautify and adorn it, time cannot weaken it, and eternity cannot exceed it in duration. Man feels it in his dread of annihilation, and his longing after immortality; and he sees one prominent feature of it in his pursuit after knowledge and his desire for wisdom and truth. When the system is excited by fever, attenuated by disease, the physical relations are in a measure broken up; and the mind has been known to possess powers never conceived of in its habitual conditions. Now when death removes the mortal, all hindrances taken away, this ponderous envelope will be shaken off; that which was insensible or dormant will quicken with intense and terrific life; every faculty of the mind hindered, clouded, or seared, will contribute of its treasures and strength to consummate the stupendous purposes of God. Forgetfulness will be removed. Oblivion sink to rise no more, careless omission driven away, and inattention lost forever. Memory will call forth hidden treasures, recollection will bring to light deeds long forgotten, and the long catalogue of deeds done, words spoken, thoughts conceived, affections experienced, will be presented in one burning point of time.

Conscience never fails in making manifest the righteousness of an accusation. She has the whole history of man in her charge. The relation which she holds to the great law of the human mind is association, and she sets the grounds of an accusation truly and faithfully. Conscience knows the truth, and neither shrinks nor hesitates for a moment in presenting it. There is no soft and soothing phrase. Never with timidity, but with freedom and power does she speak. The momentous and dreadful question is, who will know this Accuser through the long annals of eternity?

Man dies—he lives—lives eternally. Eternity! What finite mind can grasp the immeasurable cycles of eternity? What momentous interests hang on the present hour!

"The sun is but a spark of fire—
A transient meteor in the sky;
The soul, immortal as its sire,
Shall never die."

—*Rev. J. P. Smeltzer, D.D., in Lutheran Visitor.*

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

There are two ways of teaching—by precept and example. Teaching by precept says, "Climb up the mountain;" teaching by example says, "Place your foot where I put mine and follow me." Teaching by precept is common to saints and philosophers; teaching by example is the high prerogative of the saints. Teaching by precept begins with the understanding, and may reach the heart; teaching by example begins with the heart, and can hardly fail to reach the understanding. Our Lord Jesus Christ uses both methods. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, as men could bear it; but side by side with the precept He gave the example, and all through His life He enforced His precepts by the eloquence of His conduct, until at the last He gathered up all into one appeal when He stretched out His hands upon the Cross. And what was the lesson on which He laid most stress? Chiefly the passive virtues, but He did not overlook the more active virtues, which found a place in the seven last words from the Cross.

But, secondly, Jesus Christ, with His hands outstretched, appeals to the sense of what He has done for us. Why is He there? Not for any demerit of His own, not only or even chiefly to teach us virtue. He is there because otherwise we must have been lost; He is there to reconcile us to God; He is there because He has taken our nature upon Him, and in this capacity he must suffer the punishment which, in virtue of the moral laws by which the universe is governed, is due to sin. It is in obedience to no