

now in the great valley that, beginning near the Dead Sea, and on a line with Hebron, sweeps down in the shape of an arc, and out to Gaza, embracing in it Beer-sheba and other noted resorts of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

April 12, Sunday. Again we felt constrained to travel on Sunday. The camels were not ready for some time after we were. A very heavy dew was on the grass, the first we had seen; a proof that we were out of the Wilderness. Two hours brought us to the Pass of Taiyebah. On the right was Tell Arad, the Arabic name being the same as the ancient Hebræan, thus identifying the home of Arau, king of the Amorites, who fought against the Israelites when they tried to force a passage into the South Country. The location of Arad does much to fix Safah as the ancient Zephath, where the passage was attempted. This pass was our last big climb before reaching Hebron, and when it had been scaled, we were at once in the Hill Country of Judea. At the ruins of Maon (1 Sam. xxv. 2) there is nothing worthy of note, but at Kirmul there is an ancient fortress in fair preservation. The tower is the principal feature. The stones are hewn with square edges, and the masonry is very solid and massive. On adjacent hills are extensive ruins, and near by is a large pond of water, showing that here was once, probably within the Christian Era, a large city. This was undoubtedly the Carmel of 1 Sam. xxv., then probably only a district of country ("the Park," a "well-wooded place,") where Nabal sheared his sheep when the fugitive David preferred his request for help. The churl would have paid dear for his insolence but for the timely interference of the sensible and beautiful Abigail. Ahmet had already hastened on to prepare for our arrival at Hebron. After mounting, a ride of about three hours brought us to Tell Zaf, the ancient Ziph, the outlying wilderness and woods of which were a stronghold of David. Thither he was twice pursued by Saul. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 15, 24; xxvi. 2. Thence, over a beautiful plain, by ample reservoirs of water, and in sight of several ruins, we descended and crossed Wady el Kuhlil, which runs south-west till lost in Wady es Seba, and then a sharp climb under the hot sun brought us on the brow of the hill overlooking the ancient city of Hebron. Turning abruptly to the right we passed down by the great reservoir where Abraham watered his flocks, and skirting a Mohammedan cemetery on the left, we found our camp pitched just opposite the Quarantine, on the west slope of the valley. As we rode into the town the whole population turned out to see us, and about our camp gathered Arab, Christian, and Jew.

The next forenoon, with a Jew as guide, we walked northward through the valley, beyond doubt the ancient valley of Eshcol, until, about one mile from the city, we came to a rather pretentious gateway which leads into the grounds where stands the oak of Abraham. I presume there is no question but that this oak and its neighbour are the direct descendants of the oaks by which Abraham pitched his tent after he had separated from Lot before Bethel, and "removed and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron;" and beneath the shade of which he sat at his tent door when visited by the three angels on their way to destroy Sodom. Gen. xiii. 18; xviii. 1, etc. The traditional tree stands in a large grassy inclosure, about two hundred yards from the main road. Around the trunk is a stone wall several feet high, filled in with earth. The trunk is twenty-three feet in girth. There are three main limbs or branches, respectively measuring eight feet, fifteen feet six inches, and seven feet five inches in girth, and the continuous shade thrown by the tree is twenty-six feet three inches by seventy-eight feet, and would easily afford standing-room for one thousand persons. One dead, broken limb was the only part from which it was allowable to take a relic. I had wondered the day before where grew the grapes of Eshcol, as just below Hebron we had seen no vineyards; but now my wonder was at an end; throughout this valley, as far as the eye can see, are extensive vineyards. They are inclosed with stone walls, with watch-towers, and the vines generally look to be very old. The best grapes of Southern Palestine are produced in this valley, thus confirming not only by the traditional name, but also by the superior quality of the fruit, the probable site whence the spies bore the specimen grapes and figs; for here, too, the fig-tree abounds, its tender leaves and fruit were just appearing.

If we would expect the answer of prayer, our practices should be like our prayers.

SEEING HEAVEN.

BY THE REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

"Thou hast given me a south land, give me also springs of water; and he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs."—Joshua xv. 19.

IT is very fortunate that we cannot see heaven until we get into it. Oh, Christian man, if you could see what a place it is, we would never get you back again to the office, or store, or shop, and the duties you ought to perform would go neglected. I am glad I shall not see that world until I enter it. Suppose we were allowed to go on an excursion into that good land with the idea of returning. When we got there and heard the song and looked at their raptured faces and mingled in the supernal society, we would cry out, "Let us stay." We are coming here anyhow. Why take the trouble of going back again to that old world? We are here now, let us stay." And it would take angelic violence to put us out of that world, if once we got there. But as people who cannot afford to pay for an entertainment, sometimes come around it and look through the door ajar, or through the openings in the fence, so we come and look through the crevices into that good land which God has provided for us. We can just catch a glimpse of it. We come near enough to hear the rumbling of the eternal orchestra, though not near enough to know who blows the cornet or who fingers the harp. My soul spreads out both wings and claps them in triumph at the thought of those upper springs. One of them breaks from beneath the throne; another breaks forth from beneath the altar of the temple; another at the door of "the house of many mansions." Upper springs of gladness: upper springs of light! upper springs of love! It is no fancy of mine. "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water." Oh, Saviour Divine! roll in our souls one of those anticipated raptures! Pour around the roots of the parched tongue one drop of that liquid life! Toss before our vision those fountains of God, rainbowed with eternal victory. Hear it. They are never sick there, not so much as a headache, or twinge rheumatic, or thrust neuralgic. The inhabitant never says, "I am sick." They are never tired there. Flight to farthest world is only the play of a holiday. They never sin there. It is as easy for them to be holy as it is for us to sin. They never die there. You might go through all the outskirts of the great city and find not one place where the ground was broken for a grave. The eyesight of the redeemed is never blurred with tears. There is health in every cheek. There is spring in every foot. There is majesty on every brow. There is joy in every heart. There is hosanna on every lip. How they must pity us as they look over and look down and see us, and say, "Poor things, away down in that world." And when some Christian is hurried into a fatal accident they cry, "Good, he is coming." And when we stand around the couch of some loved one (whose strength is going away) and we shake our heads forebodingly, they cry, "I am glad he is worse; he has been down there long enough. There! he is dead. Come home! come home!" Oh, if we could only get our ideas about that future world untwisted, our thought of transfer from here to there would be as pleasant to us as it was to a little child that was dying. She said, "Papa, when will I go home?" And he said, "To-day, Florence." "To-day? so soon? I am so glad."

I wish I could stimulate you with these thoughts, oh Christian man, to the highest possible exhilaration. The day of your deliverance is coming, is coming. It is rolling on with the shining wheels of the day, and the jet wheels of the night. Every thump of the heart is only a hammer-stroke striking off another chain of clay. Better scour the deck and coil the rope, for harbour is only six miles away. Jesus will come down in the "Narrows" to meet you. "Now is your salvation nearer than when you believed."

Unforgiven man, unpardoned man, will you not to-day make a choice between these two portions, between the "south-land" of this world which slopes to the desert, and this glorious land which thy Father offers thee, running with eternal watercourses? Why let your tongue be consumed of thirst when there are the nether springs, and the upper springs—comfort here and glory hereafter?

Let me tell you, my dear brother, that the silliest and wickedest thing a man ever does is to reject Jesus Christ. The loss of the soul is a mistake that can never be corrected. It is a downfall that knows no alleviation, it is a ruin that is remediless, it is a sickness that has no medicament, it is a