

God unfolded His counsel to His servants the prophets (Amos. 3 : 7), and a dream was a very frequent method of communication.

Vs. 4-6. *Tell David my servant*; a title of high honor given to only a few raised up for special service, such as Moses (Josh. 1 : 1) and Joshua himself, Josh. 24 : 29. It was afterwards used of the Messiah, Isa. 53 : 11 (compare Matt. 12 : 18). *Thou shalt not.* "Thou" is emphatic: a house would be built for Jehovah, but not by David. *Not . . . in an house since . . . I brought up Israel*; out of Egypt. *Gone from tent to tent.* When one was outworn, another was prepared. The "tent" was the outer covering of the tabernacle made of goats' hair cloth (see on v. 1). Naturally this would need to be replaced oftener than the tabernacle proper, which was sheltered by it. *Spake I . . . to any of the judges, etc.?* Israel was ruled by a succession of "judges" from the time of Joshua's death until Saul became king. *To feed my people.* It was the duty of the judges to care for Israel as a shepherd cares for his sheep.

Vs. 7, 8. *I took thee from the sheepcote* (Rev. Margin, "pasture"). David is reminded that the plan of the life which has led him to greatness came from God. It was God who took him from the pasture to be prince over . . . Israel (Rev. Ver.). *I have been with thee.* God had been his companion all through his life. *Cut off all thine enemies*; thus making room for a safe and free expansion of Israel in the Promised Land. *Made thee a name*; given thee a place of honor and power amongst the rulers of the earth.

Vs. 9, 10. *I will appoint* (Rev. Ver.) *a place for . . . Israel.* God will continue to bless His people and their king. *Children of wickedness* (the enemies of God's people). No enemies shall spoil them as *at the beginning*, in Egypt, and later in the days of the Judges, when the raids of desert tribes called out champion after champion to defend the people's cause. *Build thee an house.* God will raise up for David a long line of descendants, to sit upon his throne.

III. God's Promise, 11-14.

Vs. 11, 12. *Go to . . . thy fathers*; join them in the unseen world. *I will set up thy seed* (Rev. Ver.). When David is gone, he will leave his kingdom to his son, who will be secure on the

throne. An insecure succession to the throne was and is much dreaded in the East; it darkened Saul's days. *He shall build me an house.* David's son shall build the house David was minded to build. All that the father could do was to make great preparations, accumulate materials, cement his alliance with Tyre and lay for Solomon the foundations of general peace. (See ch. 22: 1-5.)

Vs. 13, 14. *His father . . . my son.* David's son is to be the object of the paternal love and guidance of Jehovah. God's kindly care will follow him always; it will not be taken away, as *from him that was before thee*; that is, Saul, *Established forever.* David's son shall bequeath the kingdom to an everlasting posterity; the sceptre shall never depart from David's house.

The promises of vs. 11-14 were fulfilled partly in Solomon and the succeeding kings of Israel; they found their final and complete fulfilment in Christ (see Luke 1 : 31-33; Acts 2 : 29-31). He is the Son of God in the highest sense, and it is His kingdom alone that endures forever.

Having received these wonderful promises, David goes into the tent where was the ark, the symbol of God's Presence ("before the Lord"), and there offers thankful praise for the goodness and lovingkindness of God. (See vs. 16-27.)

Light from the East

CEDARS—Grow now in Syria, only in one valley, north of Beyrout, about 6,000 feet above the level of the sea. They are all on two sides of a ravine, covering five or six acres, and number about 500 trees. But their cones have been carried into almost every civilized country, and they are reproduced everywhere. Most of them are small, and even the larger trees, having grown up in the open, have no great height of trunk, but branch out a short distance from the ground. The outer part of the trunk is white wood, the real red cedar is in the heart. It is a very durable wood, but not fine grained, nor sufficiently compact to take a high polish; but it was the best wood available for general purposes in olden times. Its durability is owing to the large quantity of resin which it contains, which exudes from every puncture