

have been the announcement in the ears of an unbelieving world! The son of the carpenter expounding those mysteries which baffled the wisdom of Socrates and of Plato!—the lowly Nazarene setting himself up in opposition to the learned Jewish doctors, the Scribes and the Pharisees!—the rugged mountain sides and peaceful lakes of Judea listening to words of wisdom deeper far than ever sounded in the classic groves of Athens, or were ever promulgated in the heat of Alexandrian schools! Yet so it was, Divine Teacher sent from God—the history of all who have come to Thee for light and wisdom bear witness to the fact—the history of myriads of anxious and enquiring spirits who have since found rest and peace in thy soul-satisfying doctrines, who have declared, in the words of my text, “I am the light of the world.”

In discoursing further on these words, let us endeavor to ascertain some of the ways in which the Lord Jesus proved Himself to be the Light of the world,—praying that the Holy Spirit will enlighten our minds that we may take Him as our light and guide through the wilderness of life.

But, first of all, let me remark that it is extremely difficult for those who have been instructed from infancy in the sublime truths which the Lord Jesus came to reveal, to realize the magnitude of the change effected in human thought, hopes and aspirations by the teaching of Christ Jesus. Those who always live in the light of the sun—upon whom it sheds its golden beams day after day—lighting up with beauty and life every object around them, may live on *enjoying* the blessings and comforts of light without ever *thinking* of the grand orb of day—the centre and source whence it all proceeds. Just so it may be with professing christians: they may enjoy many of the advantages consequent on the life and teaching of Christ, while they seldom think of Him to whom they are indebted for them all. But, on the other hand, take him who has spent his existence in a dark dungeon or a rayless cave—bring him up to the light of day—place him under the noon-day sun, and how very different his emotions! No sooner are his dazzled eyes able to look upwards than he gazes with something like adoring wonder at yon great burnished ball of light whence proceeds this glorious flood of an all-pervading, joyous, life-giving light. And somewhat similar to the state of this denizen of the cave or prison, was that of the world previous to the coming of Christ Jesus. Moral and spiritual darkness reigned with an almost universal sway—man, like a planet broken loose from its orbit, wandered away into darkness from the great centre of light. The gold had become dim, and the much fine gold changed. The notion of a Divine unity was lost among the great heathen nations. Gods were multiplied to preside over every energy of nature—pas-

sions were ascribed to them such as the worshippers found rankling in their own bosoms—the people made their gods, and such gods encouraged the people in the commission of sin. Even Judaism had lost much of its spirituality—tradition usurped the place of revelation—rites, ceremonies and outward observances flourished when the spiritual truths they were intended to convey had passed into forgetfulness. Such, then, was the state of darkness when the God-man appeared proclaiming to a benighted universe—“I am the light of the world.”

Let us first view the Lord Jesus as the light of the world with special reference to Judaism—as the grand antitype which that less perfect dispensation was intended to typify.

Judaism was, from its very nature, temporary and imperfect. The light which it shed along the pathway of humanity journeying toward everlasting rest, was rather the dim and flicker streaks which we recognize as the harbingers of coming day, than the full orb of light streaming down upon the world in perfect and refulgent splendor. As a system of light and instruction, its types and symbols were what pictures are to the untutored mind of the child—media through which instruction may be conveyed while as yet he cannot grasp abstract principles with which a fully developed intellect can deal. In that sublime course of instruction destined by God for his Church upon earth, through which it may arrive at perfect manhood, the older economy may be said to represent the rude and unfinished education of the boy—imperfect, indeed, in itself, but essentially necessary toward the higher education of the perfect man. The principles of truth are there, but they are there only in germ; the material of thought is present, yet time, labor and patience are necessary for working them out into a perfect system. But endeavor, for a moment, to remove the Lord Jesus from this Old Testament Dispensation, and observe what remains; exclude that ray of light, and the twilight thickens into impenetrable gloom; shut out the grand idea of the God-man bringing salvation, and everything in that complex ritualism loses its otherwise deep and hallowed meaning. Remove in thought the cross of Calvary, with its suffering, bleeding sacrifice—take away from history that thrilling page around which the hopes of our souls are clustered, and which contains the charter of our freedom in the ever-memorable “it is finished,” and how marvellously changed does the whole become. The grand central idea which gave harmony and unity to the system has vanished. We see, indeed, altars erected to the Most High—innocent victims led forward for sacrifice—altars sending their clouds of smoke heavenward morning and evening—blood flowing—life passing out with the blood—gorgeously appalled priests in attendance, and humble earnest