

## The Book Of Job

REV. A. J. HUGHES.

## PART II.

Next to the hero of the Book of Job, the Book itself deserves attention. The prologue, which is in prose, depicts the patriarch as a scrupulously religious man, living in the enjoyment of great prosperity. The devil regards him as serving God for worldly profit, and so accuses him to Jehovah. He is given the privilege of testing the sincerity of his faith, which he does by despoiling him of all his worldly possessions, and bereaving him of his children, with most bewildering and terrible rapidity. Job is anguished by his calamities, but resigned, his only comfort being, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The devil, still sure that Job's piety is a matter of selfishness, asks to be permitted to afflict him in his body. God grants his second request, and the patriarch is smitten with elephantiasis in its worst form. Still his faith in God remains unshaken. Reduced now to the worst depths of misery, banished from his house to the ash-heaps outside the city gates, railed at by his wife for still holding on to his integrity, and urged by her to renounce God and make way with himself, his reply was, "Shall we receive good from the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" In this doleful, but trustful, situation, Job is visited by three friends, who come to console with him because of his misfortunes, but who are so amazed at his changed situation that for seven days and nights they sit in speechless bewilderment and sadness. So ends the prologue.

The poem, in the words of a recent commentator on the book, consists of "three elaborate cycles of discourse, in which Job and his friends affirm and answer, reprove and re-terminate one another." The colloquy is begun by Job, who, unable longer to restrain the pent up anguish of his soul, curses the day of his birth, longs for the release and oblivion of death. To this wail of anguish and surprise, Eliphaz, the Temanite, apparently the oldest and wisest, and certainly the most delicate and considerate of the three friends, makes reply. His reply is to the effect that suffering is the entailment of sin, and he lets Job make his own application of the doctrine to his present state.

To this speech of Eliphaz the patriarch makes answer, defending the rashness of his previous words, complaining of the inadequacy of Eliphaz's doctrine to meet his case, interrogating God as to why he has been so mysteriously and sorely smitten, and beseeching him to lift away from him his heavy hand of affliction.

This self-justification, and arraignment of the Almighty, on the part of Job excites the wrath of Bildad, the Shuhite, who retorts in a similar strain with Eliphaz, thought without his gentleness and courtesy, charging the patriarch personally, or else his children, with sin, declaring that the end of the wicked is to be rooted out of their habitation, and assuring Job that if he is the perfect man he claims to be, God will fill his mouth with laughter some day, and his lips will sing a song of joy.

To this deliverance of Bildad Job replies with all the pathos of a man baffled in his attempts to understand God. When told as he is with gricfs which are an enigma to him, he declares justice to be an unknow quality. As to God's omnipotence, however, that is visible everywhere, and the poor patriarch feels that he has been made the victim of its afflictive might. Then comes the cry for a Daysman—"a Messianic outreach from the depths," as one calls it—One who might stand between him and God, and save him from the strokes whose meaning he could not divine. Believing in his innocency, in spite of the recriminations of his friends, he closes by remonstrating with God for subjecting him to the evils that are making so miserable his life.

This remonstrance kindles the indignation of Zaphar, the Naamathite, who charges on Job with coarse invective, telling him that his judgment is less than his desert, but that if he will repent, God will restore him to his former estate of health and prosperity.

This speech puts a gulf between Job and his friends. Regardless of their good opinion now, or of their feelings either, he flings at them the sarcasm, "Of a truth, ye are the people; and wisdom will die with you!" Then their follows,

after a glowing tribute to God's almightiness, as seen in nature and providence, an arraignment of these men as acting the part of "pleaders for God" for reward's sake, another avowal of the blamelessness of his life, and sad queryings as to the cause of his terrible calamities. Then he seems to drop into a kind of scilloquy, and utters those words so familiar as forming a part in every service for the dead, beginning, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down; he beeth also as a shadow, and he continueth not." Words, these, in which the patriarch seems to be in a conflict as between hope and despair, one time regarding the grave as the goal of life, and then, by a sort of intuition of the yearning of God towards the work of his hands, expecting to hear his voice resounding in the charnel-house, with resurrective import, to which when it greets him, he will make glad answer.

(To be Continued.)

## Repentance.

• In the year 1680 Mr. Philip Henry preached much on the subject of faith and repentance from various texts of Scripture. He told of Noah, who warned the people to repent before the flood came, but in vain. He reminded of the people of Nineveh, all of whom repented at the preaching of Jonah, and were saved. He quoted Zaccheus the publican, who, when he believed in Christ, restored fourfold for what he had unjustly gained. "If I were to die in the pulpit," he said, "I should wish to die preaching repentance; and, if I die out of the pulpit, I hope to die practicing repentance. He who repents every day for the sins of every day will, when he comes to die, have the sins of but one day to repent of."

## "Carry Sunshine With You."

A bright, fresh, sunny face is always inspiring, and it always denotes good health as well as a happy heart.

Sorrows are often like clouds, which, though black when they are passing over us, when they are past become as if they were the garments of God thrown off in purple and gold along the sky.  
HENRY WARD BEECHER.

## A Official Trip

Rev. Dr. Carman, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church, has just started on a three months' trip to England and Jerusalem. He will attend Conferences in England, Ireland and Scotland of delegate from the General Conference of the Canadian Methodist Church.

To those who, while able to give much, give little and grudgingly to Christian missions, Dr. Parkhurst says a single dollar may look large, but when spread over a year it is too thin to lie down upon and pray, "They Kingdom come."

## Power Of Love.

When the life of a beloved son is hanging in the balance, no one can persuade his mother to take rest. You may tell her that others are watching, that everything is being done that can be done, that it is her "duty to take a respite;" but you might as well speak to the deaf, for she is his mother, and her mother-love will not let her be content with less than her own personal ministry to her boy. But does she think then of doing merely her duty to him? Is she measuring her conduct by any standard of rectitude? Nothing of the kind! She has risen above all standards and all duty. She does just what her love impels her, and all she does is so little able to content her, that she is only sorry she can do no more. Now, it will be the same with us and the service of God, if we only attain to love of him for what he is to us, and for what he has

done for us in Christ. It will lift us above legalism, and make the mere doing of duty seem but meagre and unprofitable. It will keep us from murmuring, and preserve us from self-complacency; for duty can be satisfied with its doings, but love can never do enough. "Thank God," said one in dying, "I have done my duty." "Alas!" says the expiring Christian, after all he has done, "I am an unprofitable servant." There is the difference between the two. Let us, then, get to this love of God in Christ, and the exactions of the Christian life will not oppress us, while the meeting of them will not puff us up; for we shall have the courage to go forward to them, and the humility not to be complacent over them.  
W. M. TAYLOR, D. D.

Of the contributions to Christian missions in 1899 Great Britain gave \$7,000,000; America, including the British colonies, gave \$5,500,000; and the rest of the world gave \$2,000,000. If what the British colonies gave were added to that given by British Empire furnished considerably more support to missions than all the rest of the world.

## The Lord's Day.

A tradesman was sent for one Sunday to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., as his Royal Highness was leaving town early the next morning. That tradesman was one who feared God more than man. At the risk of offending the Prince and losing his valuable custom, he declined to attend on the Lord's day, but took care to be at the palace early on Monday morning. "I sent for you yesterday," said the Prince. "Why did you not come?" "Your Royal Highness," was the answer, "the King wanted me." "The King! I thought my father never sent for tradesmen on Sunday." "Please, your Royal Highness, I do not mean the King your father, but the King of Kings."

• Have faith in God, and have it handy; that is the point. Faith is like a shield. Do not let it hang up in the armory. Take it, strap it on your arm, and, instead of running away, up with your shield. According to the Scriptures, faith is a breastplate. What does the Word say we are to do with it? "Putting on the breastplate of faith and love." Shall we call faith an anchor? Well you know the story of the Dutchman's anchor, which was no good to him, for he kept it at home. That is what some people do with their faith. Oh, take it out to sea with you.

## Religious News.

The plans for special work  
FIRST HARVEY. Have been providentially broken up by sickness in my family. The confidence, sympathy and good will of my people who practically and feelingly set forth in a very kind address, setting forth their ability to weep for others' woes especially when it was their pastor. The address was attended with a purse of \$70. This being in addition to salary became at once a silver lining to the dark cloud. Such expressions are appreciated, not only for the cash but as well for the sympathies, and prove valuable as an inspiration for our soldiers to become better soldiers of Jesus Christ. May the donors realize fully the force of Scripture which says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and may their souls be fed and strengthened both for service and enjoyment in such Christlike ministrations with which they have abounded toward us during our sojourn in their midst. We desire hereby to publicly express our heartfelt appreciation of the sympathy and kindness so graciously expressed.  
REV. T. BISHOP.

TABERNACLE,  
ST. JOHN.

The power of God is still being manifested among the people of the Tabernacle Baptist Church.  
Pastor Stackhouse baptized a happy convert at the close of the evening service April 29th. Others are to follow in the same way soon.