

has no terrors for him. The aged widow seems to have been equally rejoiced. Dr. Kitto thinks she had lived in a state of widowhood 84 years; others suppose 84 years was her full age. "Fall and rising, &c."—Isaiah viii. 14, 15. Under the spirit of prophecy he foretold that many would reject Christ and perish in their sins. Others, through his grace and power, would be saved from ruin. How are you treating Christ? If you reject him, your fall will be worse than if you had never heard his name.

LESSONS.

1. Here we have the doctrine of original sin, and our need of regeneration and sanctification. Ps. li. 5, 10.

2. God accepts the offerings of the poor as readily as of the rich.

3. We all belong to God.

4. A great privilege to have pious parents. Great responsibility.

5. A life of piety, along with the study of the word of God, never fails to secure many spiritual advantages. Renders us happy. Prepares for death, &c.

6. It is our duty to speak to others about Christ.

SECOND SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *Visit of the wise men.* Matt. ii. 1-12.

We are not told how long the parents of Jesus remained in Bethlehem. We do not know where the wise men found the infant King of the Jews, nor how long it was after his birth. From the commotion produced in Jerusalem by the visit of the "wise men," we are disposed to believe that the "presentation" of Jesus at the Temple must have occurred *before* their arrival.—After this, Joseph and Mary probably returned to Bethlehem. There was a general expectation throughout the East, that some exalted personage would about this time appear in our world. These "Magoi," as they are called in Greek, knowing this, and perceiving the luminous object (probably a meteor) by which the event was indicated, set out from their native country to visit the future King of the Jews, and offer to him suitable tokens of respect. They did not worship Jesus in the sense of rendering to him religious homage, but such as was suitable for an earthly monarch. Herod was now old, and could not expect to live till this child had arrived at manhood, but still his suspicious, cruel disposition was roused into activity by the words of the Magi. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were also agitated, probably fearing a renewal of some of the scenes of bloodshed of which the same Herod had been the author. Herod knew that the scriptures contained prophecies regarding Christ. He therefore

applies for information as to the place where Christ should be born. This was easily answered. Micah v. 2. There was another town of this name, (Josh. xix. 15.) but the one here referred to, belongs to Judah.

V. 12.—These Magi probably intended to return to Herod with the information he so much desired, but they are prevented by a message from God.

LESSONS.

1. Those who enjoy the most favorable opportunities of knowing Christ, are often more ignorant than others less highly favoured.

2. If we would find Christ we must follow the light which God affords us for guidance. 2 Peter i. 19; John v. 39.

3. Men may be acquainted with the scriptures and yet remain ignorant of Christ, and without salvation.

4. Satan and his emissaries are ever plotting against the kingdom of Christ.

5. All their wicked purposes shall be thwarted.

THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *Flight into Egypt.* Matt. ii. 13-23.

V. 13.—It is easy for God to disappoint the devices of the wicked. He knows their hearts, and he knows the purposes of the wicked before they have taken shape in their own minds. We find here that God warned Joseph of the impending danger, and directed him to flee into Egypt. In the providence of God, many Jews had already settled in the part of the land of Egypt lying next to Palestine; and here we may suppose, Joseph found a home, if not among friends yet among his own countrymen, who would not be idolaters like the Egyptians.

V. 14.—There is neither time or permission to enquire into the propriety of God's commands. Implicit and immediate obedience is demanded of us.

V. 16.—Herod's conduct shows to what length ungodly men will run in the ways of evil, for the purpose of accomplishing their infernal purposes. Seldom has our world witnessed a more distressing scene than this. But God, though permitting the ungodly sometimes to go such lengths in wickedness, will surely visit for such things. He soon after died a most awful death,—all the more so, because he continued to the very last the same monster of revenge and cruelty, giving no ground to hope that he had obtained mercy. Herod, instead of having thwarted the divine purposes by his atrocious wickedness, had undesignedly been the occasion of bringing about the fulfilment of at least two prophecies, viz., Hos. xi. 1, and Jer. xxxi. 15, 16. These, like many others, have a two-fold application. The