

afterwards they fell into the sins here specified, for they sinned against the clearest light.

1. They must not consecrate their children to Moloch. See Lev. 18: 21. Moloch was an idol worshipped by the Ammonites with human sacrifices. According to the Rabbins it was made of brass, was hollow, and when sacrifices were to be offered, a fire was kindled within it, and when the arms became red hot the victim was thrown into them, and was burned to death. The cries of the victim were drowned by drums, &c. It has been doubted whether the account of the Rabbins is strictly correct. Still, the facts that human life was in some way taken by fire in connection with Moloch worship, and that the Israelites were subsequently guilty of this horrible crime are evident from such passages as Ez. 16: 21; Deut. 12: 31; Jer. 7: 31; Ps. 106: 37, 38, &c. Learn here the depravity of the heart. When these Israelites laid their children on the altar of Moloch it was done in sincerity. God had given them up to believe a lie. Let us not tempt God to abandon us, else we may sink into the lowest depths.

2. The Israelites were also warned against using arts of divination, such as enchantments, witchcrafts, charms, &c. The heathen who inhabited the land were much addicted to such diabolic arts, and the Israelites must guard against countenancing in any way these works of darkness, and must endeavour to be perfect, i. e., upright. The persons who used arts of divination were great imposters, professing to obtain by impious and profane practices, a knowledge which God alone could give. The sin of those who practised these arts was great, and so was the sin of those who countenanced the evil. Consult Lev. 20: 27; 2 Chron. 33: 6; Is. 8: 19, 20. Learn here the wickedness of consulting fortune-tellers, of countenancing spirit rapping, &c., sins very similar to those against which God warned the Israelites. Many young people thoughtlessly go to fortune-tellers in the form of vagrant gypsies or other worthless characters, to have the veil of the future lifted. How sinful to bid God speed to those who are impiously trying to know the secret things which belong only to God! How foolish to wish to know the future, even if it could be unveiled! God has wisely concealed the future; for if it has trouble in reserve the knowledge of that fact would embitter our present enjoyments; or, if it has good in reserve we would be dissatisfied with the present in our anxiety to reach that good.

Vv. 15, 16. When God spake to Moses on the Mount the people being overwhelmed with fear asked for an intermediate messenger between God and them who should temper the awfulness of His voice and impart instruction in a milder way. In answer to this request God gave the promise contained in these verses. See Ex. 20: 18, 19, and Deut. 5: 23-28. Some think that the meaning is that a succession of prophets would be raised up to remind the people of their duty, reprove them for their faults, and predict the future—exhibiting its judgments for warning, and its mercies for

comfort. Hence the people would have no need to consult familiar spirits. This view, which has something in the context to favour it, is not inconsistent with that which is more generally and carefully held, viz.:—that the prophet who in due time would be raised up was the Lord Jesus Christ. The ultimate reference is undoubtedly to Him. Compare Act 3: 22, 23, and 7: 36. See also John 1: 45, Luk 24: 44, and Matt. 17: 5. The points of resemblance between Moses and Christ, the type and the anti-type, were such as these:

1. The high honor conferred upon them and the commanding authority with which they spake.

2. The clearness and magnitude of their revelations.

3. The fact that the institution of a religion was founded upon these revelations.

Yet Christ was vastly superior to Moses. See Heb. 3: 1-6.

How thankful we should be for the words of the Great Teacher. Let us study them, lay them up in our hearts, and practise them in our lives. Well had it been for the Israelites had they listened to the words of Moses; it will be well for us if we listen to the words of Him of whom Moses spake. See a command in Matt. 17: 5, a promise in Joan 14: 21, and a warning in Heb. 2: 1-3.

THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*The Death of Moses.* Deut. 34: 1-12. Golden Text. Ps. 116: 5.

Because Moses in the wilderness of Zin smote the rock twice in a presumptuous spirit and did not glorify God before the people he received the intimation that he would not be allowed to enter the promised land. Compare Numb. 20: 7-12, and Deut. 4: 21, 22. Learn here how displeasing sin is in the sight of God. Learn also that God regards much as sin which men think lightly of.

Moses acquiesced in the divine intimation, and calmly performed the duties which yet devolved upon him. He made the necessary arrangements with his successor, celebrated the glory of God in a sublime hymn of praise, and pronounced upon the tribes solemn prophetic blessings. He then went up to Mount Nebo, one of a range termed Abarim, and from the summit called Pisgah. God gave him a view of the goodly land beyond the river. This sight was not to tantalize but to satisfy. Moses himself could not go over, but he was so far favored as to see the land which had been long promised to the seed of Abraham. Learn here how willing God is to temper manifestations of displeasure against sin with displays of great love for His people. Learn also that a Pisgah's view of the better Canaan reconciles the believer to death. See the hymn, "Could I but stand, &c."

Moses died. No human hands closed his eyes and laid his body in the tomb; but we may believe that angelic hands performed these offices. "He," i. e., the Lord, "buried him." His grave was concealed from the people, probably "to prevent superstition and idolatry; as many years afterwards the Israel-