

their towers better in future, nor a lesson for people to stand from under leaning towers, nor a lesson for people to cease provoking the anger of great men. None of these things. It did not need falling towers and streets runuing with blood to teach lessons of such simple and ordinary meaning. A teacher like God needs not have recourse to means so terrible to produce ends comparatively so trivial. The lesson taught by the tower of Siloam and the sword of Pilate to the Jewish nation and especially to Jerusalem, was the grand lesson that sounded through the ministry of John and the ministry of Jesus—*Repent or Perish*. The falling tower, and the flashing sword, were shadows of coming events, shadows of what would happen to Jerusalem, unless it repented, shadows of the sword of Titus which came against the city at a time when the city was crowded with sacrificers, shadows of the crumbling walls which buried under them a thousand for every one of eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell. "These men" Jesus in substance said, "are not signal examples of Divine vengeance, as ye suppose; they are not better nor worse than the men who are now around me: but they and their fate are typical of what is coming on the city and nation unless *ye repent*." And further than that—for God hath great breadth, variety, we may say multiplicity, of meaning, in his symbolical providential acts—the sudden, complete, destruction of the men on whom the tower fell, and of the men whose blood was shed, "manifestly points unrepentant sinners" (as one of our most judicious commentators remarks,) "to a *perdition, future, personal, remediless*." "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The nation did not repent, the city did not repent, and both nation and city perished exactly as this symbolical judgment foretold, under falling walls, and beneath relentless swords that regarded neither Sabbath nor sanctuary. It is true that there are in our day no Daniels to read for us the handwriting that appears at intervals in awful mystery on our walls, to startle men wrapped in pleasure or too intent on gain. We have no *living voice* now to which we must listen as the voice of God opening up to us the dark riddles of his providence; but we have the *written Word*, "whereunto we do well that we take heed,