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ISRAEL.

The history of Israel is fraught with deep and thrilling interest when regarded simply in its literal import. What history can be compared with it in variety of incident, wonder of events, development of character, or importance of influence and relation? It combines all that can affect and awaken in natural occurrences, with all that can excite and impress in supernatural intervention. It has more than all the pathos and sublimity of the noblest Epic, being founded on reality, and irradiated by truth.

This interest is, however, rendered far more powerful and affecting, by reviewing God's ancient people as typical of ourselves. In this case the sentiments which it inspires are all invested with the solemn and intense emotions of personal concern. In them we see our own selves, and in their conduct and experience our own spiritual case.

But what authority have we for so considering them? Not only the general evidence, which has already been adduced, that the economy in which they were the chief human actors was typical; but particular allusions to them as sustaining this character by the spirit of inspiration. Thus Paul says: "We are the true circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

"He is not a Jew who is one outwardly neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter." And in accordance with this language, the same sacred writer calls believers, "the Israel of God."

The particulars in which the Jews were typical of God's spiritual people are very numerous. The following are the most important, if not all of them.

I. *Their original condition.*—It was a condition of *misery and debasement*. The first time we recognise them as a people is in Egypt. And here "The Egyptians made them to serve with rigour; and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service wherewith they made them to serve was with rigour. And the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage."

Affecting counterpart of the natural humiliation and unhappiness of believers! They originally were enslaved by the cruel servitude of Satan. "Ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." And "what fruit had you in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?"