

was unsuspecting of the feelings of his brethren regarding it. Such a distinguished dress, moreover, being indicative of rank, would ensure him respectful treatment from strangers. This was a rough reception to a brother, a mere boy, who had come a long distance to enquire after their welfare, and who had never done them any unkindness. His cries for mercy afterwards rang in their ears. (ch. 42: 21). Note throughout that Joseph is a type of Christ. He is a beloved son; he came unto his own and his own received him not; he was stripped of his raiment by his executioners (Matt. 27: 28). His goodness awoke the hatred of evil men. **24. Cast him into a pit**—Doubtless they intended to leave him there to die. These cisterns abound in Palestine, and are generally bottle-shaped, so that the prisoner could not possibly get out without help. They were designed for collecting a supply of water in the rainy season. The name Dothan means "the two wells." These still exist, and one of them is called "the well of the pit," but it cannot be the one into which Joseph was thrown, for it was dry. Dr. Marcus Dods makes a fine application of Joseph's experience to the case of young persons whose ambitious plans seem to be frustrated, yet who cannot see that their apparent failure is God's way of leading them to the work he has for them to do. (See *Isaac, Jacob and Joseph*, one of the volumes of the "Household Library of Exposition.") **25. They sat down to eat bread**—"The heartless barbarity with which the brethren of Joseph sat down to eat and drink the very dainties he had brought them from their father while they left him, as they thought, to starve, has been regarded by all later generations as the height of hardhearted indifference." (Dods). See the reference to it in Amos 6: 6, and compare 1 John 3: 12. It was the sin of Cain aggravated. "We often think respecting the tyrants of whom we read in history, that they must have been haunted by the furies. It is not so; there is a worse doom for sin than this: it is that it makes the heart callous and forgetful of its presence." (F. W. Robertson). **Ishmaelites**—Called also Midianites (v. 28) and Medanites (v. 39, R. V. margin). Ishmael was the son of Hagar; Medan and Midian were sons of Keturah (ch. 25: 2), whom Abraham married after Sarah's death, so that they were tribes related to the sons of Jacob and to one another. Probably the Ishmaelites were in friendly alliance with their cousins and were joined by them in commercial enterprises, so that all three tribes would mingle in the caravan. "Ishmael left his father's house when about fourteen or fifteen years of age. His mother took him a wife probably when he was eighteen, or twenty at the farthest. He had arrived at the latter age about 162 years before the date of the present occurrence. He had twelve sons (ch. 25: 13-15), and if we allow only four other generations, and a fivefold increase, there will be about 15,000 in the fifth generation." (Murphy). **Gilead**—The "hard, rocky region," standing in contrast with Bashan, "the level, fertile tract," its companion district on the East side of the Jordan. "Except among the hill of Galilee, and along the height of Carmel, there is nothing to be compared with it as 'a place for cattle'" (Num. 32: 1). It abounded in spices and aromatic gums. (Jer. 8: 22; 46: 11). The great caravan route from Damascus to Egypt still passes by the site of Dothan, and the approach of the Ishmaelites would be easily discerned in the distance. **Spicery**—The Hebrew word has the general meaning of "an aromatic powder," but was specifically applied to gum tragacanth, or "goat's thorn" gum, yielded by the *astragalus gumifer*, a native of Mt. Lebanon, and also found in Khoordistan. **Balm**—(R. V. marg. "mastic.") *Opobalsumum*, a resinous gum having healing qualities. Botanists have not been able to identify the particular shrub, or tree named. It is mentioned again in Jer. 8: 22. It is by no means certain that gum mastic is meant. **Myrrh**—(R. V. marg. "ladanum.") A fragrant resinous gum, collected from the leaf of a plant of the rose family growing in the island of Crete (*Cistus* or *Creticus*). It is found in Palestine and Arabia. Myrrh is not found in Palestine. The word used here occurs in but one other passage (ch. 43: 11) where it is evidently "of the best fruits in the land." Myrrh is the product of the *Balsanodendron myrrha* which is found in Arabia and the adjoining parts of Africa. **Egypt**—The Egyptians used large quantities of these substances in religious ceremonies, in embalming the dead, for medicinal purposes, and as ministering to the pleasures of the wealthy. **26. Judah said**—"It must be presumed that Judah was unacquainted with Reuben's intention. The brethren were so much excited that Judah alone could not have hoped to rescue Joseph from their hand. The ferocity, especially, of Simeon and Levi, is known to us from their former history. Judah, therefore could think no otherwise than that Joseph must die from hunger in the pit. As in opposition to this, therefore, and not as a counteraction of Reuben's attempt at deliverance, is his proposal to be judged. He lived still though a slave. There was a possibility of his becoming free. He might make his escape by the caravan route that passed south through his home. Reuben in his tenderness had made a subtle attempt to save him. In the bolder policy of Judah we see that subtle attempt crossed by one more daring. No doubt both had some illfeeling towards Joseph, and were therefore, not capable of a mutual and open understanding. That both, however, preserved a better conscience than the rest, is evident from the later history." (Lange). **Conceal his blood**—Could they do this? See ch. 4: 10; Job 16: 8. **27.** For similar instances of cowardly hypocrisy see 1 Sam. 18: 17; 2 Sam. 11: 15; 12: 9. Judah knew what argument alone would save Joseph's life and give him a chance of escape. Monumental inscriptions and carvings shew that